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Citation:

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**An Event Portfolio in Rural Development: An Ethnographic  
Investigation of a Community's Use of Sport and Cultural Events**

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**An Event Portfolio in Rural Development: An Ethnographic  
Investigation of a Community's Use of Sport and Cultural Events**

**by**

**Vassilios Ziakas, B.A.; M.S.**

**Dissertation**

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of

The University of Texas at Austin

in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements

for the Degree of

**Doctor of Philosophy**

**The University of Texas at Austin**

**December 2007**

## **Dedication**

This dissertation was funded by the Hellenic Scholarships Foundation - IKY.  
I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the Foundation for its continuous support during my graduate studies in the University of Texas and towards the completion of this dissertation.

## Epigraph

*All things come out of the One and the One out of all things. I see nothing but Becoming. Be not deceived! It is the fault of your limited outlook and not the fault of the essence of things if you believe that you see firm land anywhere in the ocean of Becoming and Passing. You need names for things, just as if they had a rigid permanence, but the very river in which you bathe a second time is no longer the same one which you entered before.*

*Heraclitus, 500 B.C.*

# **An Event Portfolio in Rural Development: An Ethnographic Investigation of a Community's Use of Sport and Cultural Events**

Publication No. \_\_\_\_\_

Vassilios Ziakas, Ph.D.

The University of Texas at Austin, 2007

Supervisor: Carla Costa

Sport events have been studied predominantly in isolation from other genres, as single events that have economic or social impacts mainly for urban communities. Yet, the apparent economic and social value of recurring small-scale sport and cultural events in rural communities call for strategic and integrated planning in policies for rural development. This requires that instead of assessing the economic or social benefits of a certain event, a series of interrelated events that comprise a host community's event portfolio can be synergized to derive outcomes through a holistic planning approach that places in concert the economic and social planning of different events.

From this perspective, this study examines the event portfolio of a rural community. Ethnographic methods were employed and fieldwork was conducted in Fort

Stockton, a small community in South-West Texas. Data collection included participant observation, interviews, review of archival materials and social network analysis. The results show that Fort Stockton's event portfolio is an embedded and eclectic assemblage of sport and cultural performances, collective imaginary and thematic preoccupations of the community that are presented as suitable for spectatorship. The instrumental connectivity of events bolsters the capacity of the portfolio to serve multiple purposes although strategic cross-leverage is not employed. Thematic continuities among events in the portfolio reaffirm and establish the projected meta-messages within and outside the community. A conceptual synergy lies at the core of each event, which dramatizes the ideological conflict between individualism and collectivism, and translates it to community identity, civic esteem, and economic benefit addressing the public discourse in Fort Stockton and mobilizing resources for event implementations.

The institutional framework of Fort Stockton constitutes the basis of its capacity to capitalize on its event portfolio. Event organizers operate within an informal event network that frames their cooperative efforts to host events. Therefore, the event portfolio stands as an embedded system in which an integrated approach is taken about economic and social development by creating synergies between sport and cultural events and in turn using them for consolidating the community and fostering tourism. Finally, the theoretical and practical implications that derive from the study are discussed.



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## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

The importance of sport events is widely accepted by communities and governments for a variety of reasons, which are politically (e.g., Burbank, Andranovich, & Heying, 2002; Hiller, 2000; Manning, 1981), socially (e.g., Fredline & Faulkner, 2001; Kemp, 1999; Ritchie & Smith, 1991), culturally (e.g., Jonsson, 2003; Kruckemeyer, 2002; McCabe, 2006), and economically grounded (e.g., Crompton, 1999; Kang & Perdue, 1994; Mules & Faulkner, 1996; Pennington-Gray & Holdnak, 2002; Ritchie, 1984; Spilling, 1996). However, the vast majority of research in the area of sport events and regional development lies in the economic impact of mega or large-scale events for a city or a community. The potential of mega-events to generate tourism visitation, enhance a destination's image, and foster trade as well as commercial development has been emphasized by a number of authors undertaking research in the area of sport tourism (Chalip & Leyns, 2002; Jago, Chalip, Brown, Mules, & Ali, 2003; Gibson, 1998; Standeven & De Knop, 1998; Bramwell, 1997). Similarly, mega-events have been used as a policy tool in urban regeneration strategies. Two examples are Barcelona with the Olympic Games, and Sheffield with the Commonwealth Games (Garcia, 2004; Roche, 2000; Gratton & Henry, 2001).

The use of mega-events as part of a regeneration strategy for cities has generated unmet expectations. For example, the Olympic Games in Athens did not result in increased tourism visitation as expected. Instead, it left the host city with raised environmental concerns and put pressure over the public funding incurred for the Games (Star Tribune, 2006). In contrast, the Sydney Olympic Games achieved to build a

destination brand for the city and for Australia through leveraging activities before and during the games (Brown, Chalip, Jago, & Mules, 2004; O'Brien & Gardiner, 2006).

As a consequence of the mixed results associated with the use of mega events, researchers and planners are questioning whether cities would be better off by having recurring small-scale events versus one-off large events. Authors assert that small-scale events can play a vital role in fostering a community's enthusiasm for events and building its capacity to host larger events (Jago et al., 2003; Chalip, 2004). In this regard, a host community may consider utilizing the different small and larger events in unison for a number of purposes. A series of recurring and interrelated events that a community hosts is an "event portfolio." Relatedness refers to the ways that events complement one another, which occurs through capitalization on capacity to engender markets, transfer of knowledge, symbiotic theming, and shared volunteer pools. Therefore, recent research in sport and event management suggests that a community can develop or enhance a portfolio of events that take place at different times of the year and that appeal to consumers across the range of psychographic profiles to which the destination seeks to appeal (Schreiber & Lenson, 1994; Getz, 1997; Chalip, 2004).

The different genres and event types that constitute an event portfolio may also serve as a common ground that will enhance collaboration among the different event stakeholders as well as the policy community. This has critical advantages. In particular, social, tourism, economic or sport development may be viewed under a common framework, and not in isolated and fragmented approaches, having thus the potential to foster collaboration among policy domains and diverse event stakeholders.

Sport and event management scholars started to address the potential of an event portfolio but the focus has been marketing-driven. For example, in terms of destination



marketing, Chalip and Costa (2005) argue that the strategic incorporation of sport events into destination branding requires that each event be cross-leveraged with others in the destination's event portfolio. In this sense, it seems that the value of an event portfolio is not measured by the media its events create, but rather, by the portfolio's capacity to build its brand for residents and visitors alike (Chalip, 2005). Such specialized applications of the event portfolio idea are useful, but there is a need for a unified multi-dimensional framework for the study of event portfolios. Such framework will provide the common ground for future research in particular areas such as marketing, policy, leverage, and tourism aspects of event portfolios.

Subsequently, the main challenge for the study of event planning and production is the development of a common framework that can ground joint strategies, synergies and collaboration among different event stakeholders within a portfolio. In this context, research needs to focus on the diverse contexts and sets of purposes that different events are mandated to serve. Events can be utilized for maximizing economic, tourism or social outcomes and can consequently become tools for strategies in policy domains of economic regeneration, community revitalization, or sport and tourism development. Event planning does not prescribe a focus on a particular domain unless the purpose of an event falls in the realm of particular domains. In other words, the study of event portfolios may seek to identify strategies and tactics for event implementations in contexts as diverse as the purposes of events. This bears the potential for integrating strategies and tactics when events aim to serve multiple purposes.

A strategic and holistic focus on event portfolios may shed light on the sustainability of event outcomes. In other words, it is important to start seeking a strategic integration of events with other policy domains that support sustainable development and

can incorporate event outcomes in such policies. This may be the ultimate step in the study of event portfolios. Rather than studying events as ephemeral and dispensable components in community structures, the study of event portfolios seeks to identify the factors that facilitate or impede the processes of embedding events in socio-economic and policy structures.

However, the more common focus on event impacts has contributed to the predominant view of sport events as single events and not as related to others hosted by the same community. Hence, little is known about the relationships of sport events with other genres, on how to develop synergies between sport and cultural events (Garcia, 2001), and about the missing links that impede the incorporation of events into development policies. In order to address the above knowledge gaps, a series of events can be examined in a host community. This examination will explain the interrelationships of different events so that synergies can be fostered and maintained in the context of an event portfolio. From this perspective, it is imperative to advance knowledge in the ways that a host community can use an event portfolio to serve multiple policy purposes. The holistic approach in event portfolio planning can integrate economic and social development as well as foster relationships between sport and cultural events. Towards this end, the missing links that can integrate events in development policies and build knowledge towards the ways events can be embedded in socio-economic and policy structures and processes need to be identified.

Overall, this line of inquiry may help us to develop synergies between sport and cultural events in the context of an event portfolio and strategically utilize them for community and tourism development. On a broader level, this line of thinking could assist host communities incorporate events into their institutional frameworks and utilize

them for sustainable regional development. However, there is no published research that examines an event portfolio and the ways it can be utilized by host communities. The undefined, informal and fragmented nature of event portfolios has not yet attracted the attention of many academics, and thus the creation or grouping of a series of interrelated events has mostly been left to the conventional wisdom and creativity of event organizers and host communities.

Therefore, this study aims to address this omission and build knowledge in this area by examining the relationship between sport and cultural events in the context of an event portfolio and its implications for tourism and community development. This project attempts to integrate several the areas of study into a unified framework. In this respect, it is asserted that events should be seen as a component within a broader local development policy agenda and fully integrated within it, rather than just treated as an attractive but dispensable component. This approach holds that the impact of events cannot be understood merely in plain economic and social terms but also as momentums of human and social interaction that epitomize the expression of values that embody or reconstruct social conditions.

#### **EVENT PORTFOLIOS IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

In order to identify the best means to organize an event portfolio and create synergies among different events, it is heuristically useful to examine the diverse roles and common elements of events in relation with the contextual socio-political and economic dynamics of a host community. The contextual dynamics support the planning and organization of events and may implicate different ramifications for the implementation of strategies and tactics. Such insights can start from studying event

portfolios in the context of rural or urban communities. The case of rural communities that capitalize on events for the development of their economy and social fabric is distinct and needs to be examined.

In particular, rural communities throughout the world have been increasingly using tourism as a means to diversify and revitalize their economies (Kneafsey, 2000; Luloff et al., 1994). Depending on the available natural and cultural resources or other features of a rural area, policies for the development of rural tourism may utilize sport events and festivals as key attractions (Butler, Hall, & Jenkins, 1998; Higham & Ritchie, 2001; Roberts & Hall, 2001). Event and festival production can be a versatile highly effective means for publicizing a rural community's appealing features and attracting tourists who might otherwise never visit (Janiskee & Drews, 1998). Yet, the beneficial effects of festivals extend well beyond generating tourism dollars, and include strengthening the social capital of rural communities (Arcodia & Whitford, 2006; Derrett, 2003; Fortes, 1936; Walter, 1981) and enriching the quality of small-town life (Brennan-Horley, Connell, & Gibson, 2007; De Bres & Davis, 2001; Picard & Robinson, 2006).

In terms of tourism development, festivals are valuable because they provide entertainment that dramatically increases a community's visitor appeal. Communities can generate event-based tourism by simply hosting differently-themed festivals at appropriate intervals throughout the year (Janiskee & Drews, 1998). Thus, the reliance of many rural communities on event tourism as a major revenue source prompted them to seek ways to create new events and festivals. This resulted in the proliferation of events. However, the increased competition and market saturation in combination with insufficiencies of rural communities often led events to failure, causing frustration about events in the host communities. Key factors of failure include the lack of funding,

inadequate marketing or promotion, lack of strategic planning and human resources expertise (Getz, 2002; Lade & Jackson, 2004).

To differentiate themselves within the competitive event tourism markets, rural communities often capitalize on their culture, history and tradition to become destinations. The mobilization of heritage serves to celebrate a seminal aspect of the host community's life (Janiskee & Drews, 1998; McCabe, 2006; Xie, 2003; Ray, McCain, Davis, & Melin, 2006) while promoting the host community as destination and generating tourism revenues. This has led to the increasing cultural invention of events in the guise of community revitalization especially in disadvantaged areas or communities, which face the challenge of economic depression (Cameron, 1987). In other words, festival forms are increasingly being invented and organized with a main purpose of attracting tourist audiences, as well as catering for various types of communities (Robinson et al., 2003). Thus, the value that events may derive is as much social as economic (Higham & Ritchie, 2001; Xie, 2003). In this regard sport, culture, tradition and entertainment can be blended in rural events and festivals to deliver a social experience to local people such as celebrating local identity and shared values (Derrett, 2003) while being used as a marketing tool to enhance the image of the host community and attract tourist visitation (Janiskee & Drews, 1998).

Since the use of sport and special events in rural tourism and wider revitalization efforts is expected to derive both economic and social value for host communities, the development of an event portfolio that synergizes economic and social outcomes of events is useful. This could help set common objectives, coordinate strategies, organize ancillary activities supporting common goals, facilitate the communication of social networks and build relationships among different stakeholders. In other words, a joint

framework is essential in event policy in order to utilize events for creating and enhancing the social capital of the host community yielding both social and economic outcomes. Within the context of an event portfolio, a symbolic social space can be created that enables metaphoric discourse over contentious matters and brings people or segments of the host community together that otherwise might not even communicate with each other.

The development of a joint policy framework is not a simple task, since economic and social interests are often antithetical. Yet, there is an extent to which synergies can be created to integrate both perspectives. For example, the social outcomes of sport events may be furthered when the arts are used to complement sport, and when commercial elements support social leverage (Chalip, 2006). Similarly, the sports and the arts performances can be blended with social-focused elements designed to support both economic and social objectives. The enormous variety of different contexts and events, however, challenges the development of a comprehensive and coherent approach by which seemingly antithetical components (e.g., commercialization versus social focus, sport spectacle versus arts' intellectuality, etc.) can be combined. Clearly, more research is needed to elucidate the ways that social objectives can integrate sport and arts events as well as event commercialization and social development.

#### **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The theoretical framework that conceptually guides this study is based on the integration of the sport and event management research. These areas have seemingly disparate lines of inquiry that can help us build knowledge and develop a holistic understanding of event portfolios and their potential. Thus, the anthropological

interpretation of events, leisure research, community and sustainable development, tourism studies, and social network theory are examined. Since events are diverse, fragmented from their nature, and interlinked with the contexts of host communities, the multiplicity of actors and their interests is highly complex in an event portfolio.

Thus, the study seeks to theorize, based on exploratory ethnographic fieldwork, how a host community may plan synergistically the series of its sport and special events as a strategic tool for regional development. The role of social networks that may support the integration of events and collaboration among different event stakeholders as well as the policy community is central to this line of inquiry. In this regard, an event portfolio is shaped by and in turn reshapes the existing social networks that comprise a community's social fabric.

At a fundamental level, this study strives to articulate that a holistic understanding of the meaning and roles of events is required in order to enhance social networks, build communities of celebration and utilize events effectively. The understanding of events as symbolic rituals and social dramas that express a set of cultural meta-languages can suggest ways to integrate sport, arts and cultural event elements that maintain a community's authentic representation.

The creation or reshaping of community identity and shared meaning can be achieved in folklore festivals that incorporate a diverse array of sport and cultural activities. These festivals are also vehicles for tourism and economic development but the benefits are usually ephemeral and lack programmatic planning that can connect the festivals with other smaller special events that a community hosts (Getz, 2002; Higham & Ritchie, 2001; Lade & Jackson, 2004). A systematic effort that seeks to coordinate the planning, organization and implementation of different events in terms of themes,

utilization of resources and facilities along the course of a year may not only facilitate the augmentation of events but also may integrate events with the overall mix of regional products and services. Within this context, for a host community to effectively utilize its events portfolio, an integrated approach is required that will deliberately create or enhance synergies between sport and cultural events and incorporate them into the structures and local policy agenda for sustainable regional development.

From this perspective, this study examines the ways that a community can utilize a portfolio of events to derive both social and economic benefits. The development of synergies between sport and cultural events is viewed as being critical in facilitating the communication and collaboration of the social networks that support their organization. For example, in terms of sport tourism development, the development of alliances and partnerships can foster tourism development (Weed, 2001). Such alliances and inter-organizational relationships may be developed and strengthened via events. Thus, the social capital created and enhanced via events may have positive impact on economic development.

From a community development perspective, this study examines whether the symbiosis of sport and culture in event design helps people to create or re-create a shared meaning. In this context, the social value of events can be amplified and the implications for community development can be delineated. For example, event components that promote celebration and social interaction enhancing social capital and thereby strengthening community harmony and unity can be identified. Central to this line of inquiry are the outcomes of social networks' structures on social capital in terms of building trust, mutuality and cooperation within the community (Arai & Pedlar, 2003; Borgmann, 1992; Putnam, 1995, 2001).



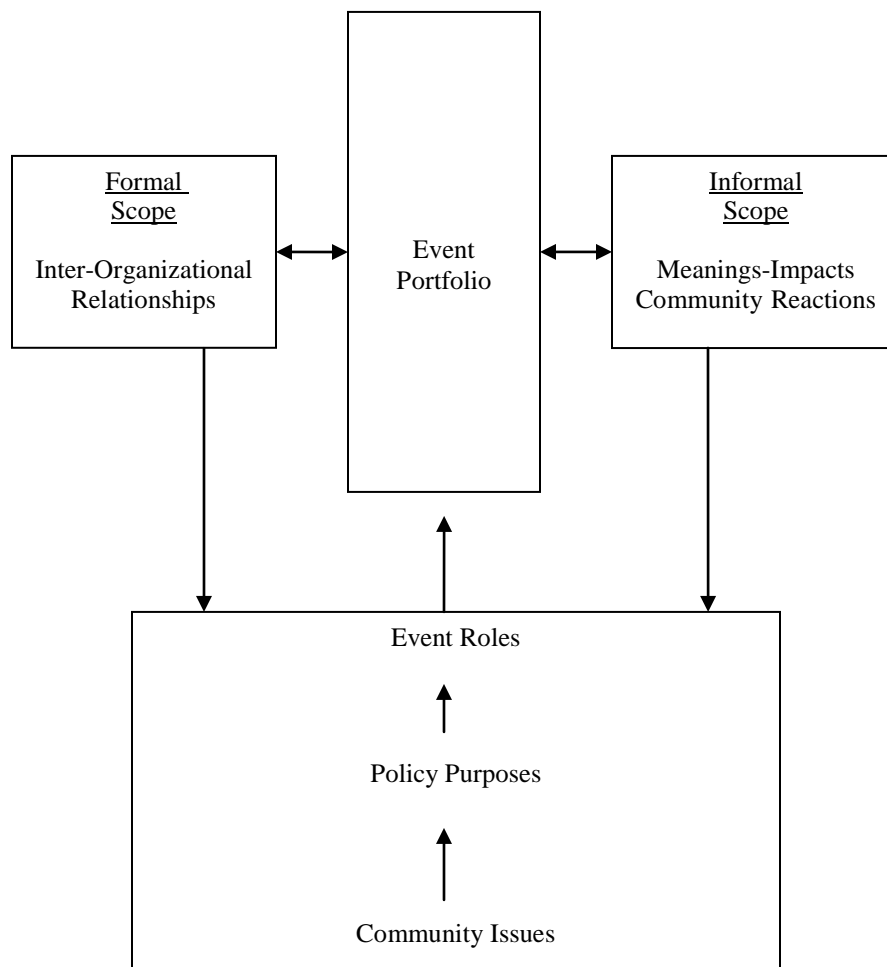
Overall, this study provides important insights into each of the above issues and should ignite further research on the area of strategic event planning for community and economic development. Being an exploratory study it aims to establish a framework for research in event portfolios and regional development. There are numerous possibilities for this line of inquiry and can yield a wide range of theoretical and practical implications.

### **CONTEXTUAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

To undertake an ethnographic study investigating the use of an event portfolio in rural development requires the selection of a host community that represents a suitable context providing possible answers. A rural community in South-West Texas, Fort Stockton, was chosen as the site for ethnographic fieldwork because it hosts an extensive range of events throughout the year striving to achieve an array of particular outcomes. Despite the innate disadvantages of a small and remote community located in the middle of South-Western desert of Texas, Fort Stockton is an eventful community that capitalizes on hosting recurring events to improve the quality of life in the area.

Due to the complex and exploratory nature of the study as well as the absence of any previous studies on the topic that could serve as guides, a contextual framework was developed integrating literature from event management (e.g., Chalip, 2004, Getz, 1997), social anthropology (e.g., Geertz, 1973, Turner, 1982), leisure studies (e.g., Arai & Pedlar, 2003; Blackshaw & Long, 2005), community development (e.g., Borgmann, 1992; Putnam, 2001), and inter-organizational relationships (e.g., Provan, 1993; Uzzi, 1997) in order to guide research design and implementation of the study. This framework is depicted in Figure 1.1:

**Figure 1.1: Contextual Framework of the Study**



The event portfolio is viewed as a concrete, though symbolic, space shaped by the interaction of formal and informal relationships, event meanings, impacts and reactions, which in turn are influenced by event implementation and its subsequent outcomes. Both formal and informal interactions may influence the event portfolio directly and indirectly. The indirect influence is manifested in community discourse and generalized states of disposition about events. The direct influence is manifested in the realm of policymakers

who responding to community issues develop policies that determine event roles and objectives.

Grounded on this contextual framework, the particular research questions that this study seeks to answer are the following:

1. What is the nature and character of the event portfolio?

This question seeks to analyze the composition of events in the portfolio identifying the types of genres that constitute the event portfolio of Fort Stockton; explain their functional and symbolic roles and whether the series of events fits in and help frame the ongoing discourse in the community; and what meanings and affiliations enhance social capital by producing and defining community through performance in events.

2. What are the event interrelationships?

This question seeks to examine the intended or unintended ways that events are related one with another; identify any lack of event relatedness or potential to engender interrelationships; explain what the role of sport events is in relation with cultural events; and whether events complement or reinforce the desired image that the community seeks to build.

3. What is the capacity of Fort Stockton's formal agencies to capitalize on the event portfolio?

This question seeks to delineate the structural context and what organizations constitute the network that supports and organizes events; explain the inter-organizational linkages that foster collaboration; and evaluate attitudes toward collaboration.

4. How can community capacity for capitalizing on an event portfolio be built and optimized?

This question seeks to identify the organizational antecedents for planning and implementing an event portfolio; explain processes or parameters that support event strategies; and the extent to which event portfolio planning can be integrated with community development.

### **EXPECTED RESULTS AND LIMITATIONS**

The contextual conditions and perceived results guided the design of the study and the selection of Fort Stockton as a site for fieldwork. Yet, this constitutes one of the limitations of the study because it involves subjective axioms, preconceptions and arbitrary decisions. The personal background and aspirations, the professional and theoretical commitments among other factors influence the interpretation of phenomena under study. For this reason, the researcher's self-reflexivity is important in ethnographic accounts exposing the subjective aspects to the presentation and analysis of data.

The expected results shaped to some extent the assumptions before starting fieldwork, which in turn influenced the interpretation of data. For this reason, they are presented. First, it was expected that the results of this study would reveal the antecedents for hosting an event portfolio and the strategic processes that support event tactics. In this context, it was hoped that the results would prescribe the best means to design an event portfolio. A central assumption of the study was that since different events can appeal to a wide range of consumers, the design of an event portfolio should include events targeting all the market segments that a host community seeks to attract.

Second, from an organizational and policy perspective it was expected that the study would illustrate the factors that facilitate or impede cooperation between event organizers and local authorities and how communities can foster inter-organizational

linkages as well as develop policy frameworks for partnership building. This investigation was hoped to demonstrate the best means to secure the relationships and organizational learning that are engendered by cooperation among event organizers, sport administrators, other event stakeholders as well as local policymakers.

Another important limitation of the study is that it documents and analyzes the event portfolio of a small, rural community. Since this is the first study of this nature, comparison cannot be made with results of other studies in different contexts. The findings of this study need to be examined and replicated in other contexts. Only through this way the conclusions and theorizations of this study can be generalized.

#### **STRUCTURE OF THE DISSERTATION**

The structure of the dissertation follows the path of research questions. Thus, each chapter seeks to analyze, explain and provide answers to each of the questions respectively. Also, for a better comprehension of the context by the reader the chapters of data presentation and examination follow a logical order from the basics to a more complex analysis in order to familiarize the reader with the particularities of situations. Hence, the economic and community context of Fort Stockton is first presented followed by an overview of the event portfolio. Then the community's seminal event is analyzed as a focal performance, which influences the other events. On this basis, the rest of events are analyzed. The community's institutional structure and formal organizations are then analyzed to complete the analysis and guide the development of theoretical and practical implications, which are presented in the final chapter. In particular, the structure of each chapter is the following:

The second chapter reviews the literature on event leveraging, pertinent anthropological research on events, leisure and tourism studies, social network analysis and sustainable community development literature bringing together these seemingly disparate lines of inquiry. The major implications that derive from the literature review are then presented, and a framework for utilizing event portfolios for regional development is suggested.

The third chapter explains the methods employed in this study, which include ethnographic fieldwork and social network analysis. The ethnographic method entailed participant observation and in-depth semi-structured interviews. Social network analysis involved the quantitative examination of the inter-organizational relationships of the entities hosting events. For both methods data collection and analysis are explained. The problems of the methods employed are discussed, and finally the limitations of the methodology are stressed.

The fourth chapter presents an overview of the Fort Stockton's community and economic context. Demographic and economic data are presented in order to delineate the community's particularities that influence the organization of events. In this regard, the roles of events in Fort Stockton are examined in order to understand how they relate to public discourse and address community issues. An overview of Fort Stockton's event portfolio is also portrayed with a brief description of its major and indicative events and their contribution to the community.

The fifth chapter examines the seminal and defining event of Fort Stockton, which is Water Carnival. First, an account of the historical conditions that led to the creation of the event and its reflections are taken into consideration. Then, the

organization and design of Water Carnival is examined in relation to the patterns of social and ethnic relations that shape the event and in turn are re-confirmed by it.

The sixth chapter analyzes the rest of Fort Stockton's major events in relation to one with another in order to identify commonalities and disparities. The different genres and event types are considered as illustrating multiple versions and interpretations of the social context of the community. Yet, at the same time different events may complement and reinforce meanings via the conceptual continuity and the common internal logic that permeates the symbolic use of event elements. Through this perspective the chapter seeks to identify the means to nurture synergies among events in the portfolio.

The seventh chapter sheds light on the inter-organizational framework of Fort Stockton's event portfolio. The structural context of formal organizations hosting and supporting events is analyzed and the factors that facilitate or impede collaboration toward the incorporation of events into the economic and social development are identified and explained. A network analysis is undertaken envisaging Fort Stockton's informal special event network in order to evaluate community capacity to host effectively an event portfolio.

Finally, the concluding chapter presents a synopsis of the findings about Fort Stockton's event portfolio. On this basis, the theoretical and practical implications that derive from the study are presented in the final chapter. The conceptual models that were generated from this inquiry are explained and future research directions for the study of event portfolio are suggested.

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

This chapter reviews the literature on the emerging area of event portfolios, pertinent anthropological research on events, leisure and tourism studies, sustainable community development and social network theory bringing together these seemingly disparate lines of inquiry. The major implications that derive from the literature review are then presented, and a framework for research is suggested that will allow the investigation in the area of event portfolio planning for regional development.

### **TOWARDS EVENT PORTFOLIO PLANNING**

The growth and proliferation of events in contemporary societies is phenomenal and unquestionable. From small communities to entire nations events are used as tools for a variety of purposes. While the use of events is as diverse as their nature, entertainment and political or economic determinism are often predominant. Accordingly, sport events are mostly planned to serve the aforementioned purposes. Yet, even if groups in a community have the same aims for the events they host, it is common that fragmentation among event organizers precludes the potential of connecting a series of events in order to optimize their benefits.

An approach of event assortment seems to be more challenging if we consider the plethora of genres such as cultural celebrations (i.e., festivals, rituals, spectacle, etc.). The question that arises at this point is twofold: whether a series of events assorted in a portfolio can be more beneficial and if yes how the different events could be related and connected with each other. This is particularly thorny when considering not only the



disparities between sport and cultural events for instance, but also between sport and the arts themselves that often represent antithetical expressive practices, values and ideas.

There is scant knowledge and systematic research endeavor to understand how sport, cultural and/or other special events can be synergized in the context of an event portfolio in order to create or enhance benefits for a host community. Events can be understood as symbolic rituals (Turner, 1974) that have particular meanings for segmented audiences or for entire communities. Such meanings can derive an array of benefits ranging from identity construction and cultural ideology (Errington, 1990; Manning, 1981; McCabe, 2006; Rasnake, 1986) to civic esteem, economic benefit, and social capital (Burbank, Andranovich, & Heying, 2001; Crompton, 1999; Fredline & Faulkner, 2001; Roche, 2000).

In general, the meanings of events may vary according to the particular needs of a host community and the purposes the events intend to address. From this perspective, capitalizing on an event portfolio effectively and efficiently would require a common approach by which multiple purposes can be served and joint resources be utilized. Alas, there is often divergence and detachment between sport and cultural events mainly because of the different values and interpretations of the world(s) that they both represent. This has also been transferred to the academy where different disciplines study events from different perspectives and foci, which, however, rarely inform each other on how to formulate a common theory of planning and implementing events. In particular, academic attention on sport events has been focused on economic impacts (e.g., Crompton, 1995; Mules & Faulkner, 1996) or identifications that provide to fans and host communities (i.e., civic esteem) (Melnick, 1993). In contrast, cultural celebrations (i.e., festivals and carnivals) have been examined through a more multi-layered perspective

focusing on aspects of identity construction and cultivation of polysemy (e.g., Azara & Crouch, 2006; Cohen, 1998; Ho, 2000; Mathews-Salazar, 2006).

The hitherto focus on individual events limits our capacity to consider a holistic perspective on events and their potential to foster collaboration. Thus, although we know a great deal about the event impacts on economic development, event planning and urban policy as well as tourism development (Gratton & Henry, 2001; Crompton, 1999; Bramwell, 1997; Sack & Johnson, 1996; Roche, 1994; Chacko & Schaffer, 1993) this knowledge refers mainly to individual large or middle-scale events hosted by major metropolitan areas taking advantage of its urban amenities.

The critical inquiry about the use of an event portfolio is the potential it may have for becoming a policy tool that integrates economic and social purposes that events intend to serve through a joint approach for leveraging sport, cultural and other special events. Event portfolio planning explicitly requires a holistic approach in order to achieve common objectives. For example, from a sport tourism standpoint, Chalip (2006) suggests that since leverage requires that a host destination's assets be brought to bear, events should be studied with reference to the efficacy with which the host destination's product and service mix was employed to enhance the events' impacts. The same is important for mere economic or social development. Events can be analyzed with reference to a host community's overall use of assets, resources and services that impact upon events. For this reason, the emerging literature in event leveraging is reviewed in this section in order to provide directions towards event portfolio planning for community, sport tourism and economic development.

## **Event Portfolio Leverage in Sport Tourism and Destination Marketing**

It has been argued recently that the focus of sport and event management research should move from merely examining the economic or social impacts of events (e.g., Crompton, 1995; Fredline & Faulkner, 2001) towards investigating ways that events can be leveraged. In particular, Chalip (2004, 2006) called for a paradigm shift in the study of sport events from impact to leverage arguing that although impact studies provide useful post hoc information about the outcomes of events, they do not explain why those outcomes occurred (Chalip, 2006). From this standpoint, impact studies are insufficient for event planning and management (Bramwell, 1997). The lessons they provide, although can be useful guides for the future planning and organizations of events, they do not explain how these lessons will be applied on a strategic and tactical basis. Considering also the volatile nature of events and their contexts such as the diversity of environments in which they are created, impact studies do not explain how the lessons from previous events can be re-adjusted when different and unexpected circumstances arise.

According to Chalip (2004) the study of event leverage seeks to refocus event evaluation in a manner that is particularly useful for subsequent event bidding, planning, and production. The objective is to identify the strategies and tactics that can be implemented prior to and during an event in order to generate particular outcomes. In this respect, the outcomes themselves are not important as in impact studies, but are instead pertinent to the degree that they provide information about which particular strategies and tactics have been effective (Chalip, 2006).

In general, leveraging involves the processes designed to maximize investments (Chalip, 2004). In the context of events, Chalip (2004) argues that leveraging involves

those activities that need to be taken around the event itself and those that aim to maximize long-term benefits. In other words, it is the strategic planning before, during and after the event. In the sport and event management literature the predominant research focus has mainly been on the potential of events for generating economic benefits. In this regard, recent research in sport event tourism and destination marketing has sought to clarify the strategic means and leveraging tactics for events suggesting the potential value of event portfolios.

In particular, Chalip (2004) developed a model of event leveraging in which a portfolio of events is envisaged as a leverageable resource and event visitors as well as event media are viewed as strategic opportunities. To take advantage of event visitors the strategic objective of increasing trade can be set by a community, which can achieve that by the following means: entice visitors' spending, strengthen visitors' stays, retain visitors' expenditure in local community and enhance business relationships. In taking advantage of the event media, a community can enhance its destination image and brand through showcasing the destination in event advertising and promotions as well as using the event in destination's marketing and promotions. This model was built in part on four earlier studies by Chalip and Leyns (2002) on event leveraging for economic benefit. These studies demonstrated that communities, which plan and undertake leveraging activities, enhancing collaboration among different event stakeholders, may maximize the economic benefits derived from events.

The above model emphasizes the potential of an event portfolio to be leveraged as a tool for tourism and economic development as well as destination branding. Getz (1997) was actually one of the first proponents of the value of an event portfolio in enabling a destination to reach a wide market of consumers with different interests and

thus contribute to tourism development. From a tourism perspective, Getz (1997) also focused on the potential of event portfolios in overcoming seasonality by placing events off-season and therefore attracting visitation during those periods.

A sport tourism marketing perspective guides the hitherto research and theory development in the area of leveraging event portfolios. The potential of an event portfolio in terms of destination branding has been thoroughly described by Chalip and Costa (2005). In particular, they examined how sport events should be leveraged to build the brand of their host destinations. They suggested that events can take the three following different roles relative to the destination brand: as co-branding partners with the destination brand, as extensions of the destination brand, or as features of the destination brand. In this sense, they asserted that the appropriate role of an event depends on the nature of its brand. They also supported that in order to sustain the impact of events on the destination's brand, it is necessary to host events throughout the year and to find means to create synergy among them. Clearly, this advocates for the value of an event portfolio in destination marketing.

Similarly, Jago et al. (2003) suggested that destination marketers who seek to use events to build their brand must develop an event portfolio. This is mainly because a single event, even one with a high profile, has only a passing effect on the destination brand (Ritchie & Smith, 1991). Especially if the event is not strategically leveraged the results may be minimal for the host destination's brand. For example, Green, Costa, and Fitzgerald (2003), in examining the media exposure generated by a sport event for the host city of San Antonio, found that the destination obtained little exposure because there was not a coordinated promotion of city images, elements and attractions through event advertising. The authors, however, identified that event logos can provide the most

exposure for the host city and also icons can effectively differentiate the city from competitors.

An event portfolio may provide the basis for engendering and maintaining a coordinated approach between event and destination marketers. For example, Chalip and Costa (2005) supported that an event portfolio has the potential of maximizing the exposure of a host destination by projecting event mentions and visuals. The reach and frequency of those event associations to the consumers can be maximized through an event portfolio, which can be designed to appeal to diverse market segments. They suggested that by including a range of sport and cultural events that will enable brand messages to reach diverse target market segments throughout the year, the frequency of exposures and the consequent branding impact will be elevated. They emphasized, however, that each event in the portfolio should complement or reinforce the positive branding associations bestowed by other events in the portfolio.

This raises the critical issue of how to complement or reinforce the positive associations among events. If successfully engendered, the positive associations in turn bear a potential for events to complement or reinforce the desired image of a destination. Although the strategic means to achieve it have yet to be identified and elaborated it is possible that conceptual continuity of the polysemy that events convey could complement and reinforce meanings consistently throughout the event portfolio. It seems that the basis of events' conceptual continuity may lie in a shared internal logic that permeates the use of symbols, themes, narratives and other event elements.

Thus, in terms of leveraging an event portfolio it is important to cultivate continuities among events within the portfolio. For event and destination marketing, continuities among different events may facilitate the development of synergies among

them and strengthen the consistency of promotional messages, hence building the desired image of a destination. This calls for examining events in relation to one with another in order to uncover the means to nurture synergies among them. For this reason, research in sport and event management should examine event interrelationships and the ways that connectivity among events can be developed and amplified. Such an examination would also reveal the position and roles of events relative to each other.

In this respect, Chalip and Costa (2005) suggested that it is essential for destination marketers to determine what role sport events can play relative to one another and relative to cultural events. This logic can be applied to the relations and roles of all the events within the portfolio in order to nurture continuities and any other kind of connectivity. The identification and allocation of event roles in a host community requires that events types, purposes and meanings be agreed and delineated in a strategic planning approach. Such an approach would seek to establish and maintain the destined roles of events for the host community in ways that the multiformity of diverse events within a portfolio is in homeostasis with the particular characteristics and relations among events. In other words, the connectivity of events should complement and reinforce their respective roles within the portfolio and the host community at large.

Another critical question in regard with the role of events in a host community is what events should be included in the portfolio. Obviously, a host community may decide to include events that serve roles appropriate to the community's needs and policy. Chalip (2005) suggested the following three criteria that should be applied when bringing events into the portfolio with the purpose of building the destination's brand:

1. "Consumers' perceptions of the event's brand should include attributes and/or benefits that allow destination marketers to fashion a marketing

message that affirms a logical link between the event and the destination.

2. The event's brand should incorporate attributes or benefits that the destination marketer wants to reinforce in the destination's existing brand, or that the destination marketer seeks to import into the destination's brand.
3. The event's brand should not include attributes or benefits that are likely to become linked to the destination's brand, but that are incompatible with the brand that the destination seeks to promote" (Chalip, 2005, p. 172).

Destination branding is just one possible use of an event portfolio. Its uses may vary according to the policy foci a host community has for events. The multiplicity of roles an event portfolio may serve makes it an attractive policy tool. From this standpoint, the criteria for the creation and inclusion of events in a portfolio have yet to be identified and elaborated in the sport and event management literature. What seems to be a general principle, however, is that these criteria should ensure that the particular purposes the events are intended to serve, meet with the role of the event portfolio as a whole.

### **Event Leverage in Sport Tourism Policy and Marketing**

Recent research about event leverage in the context of mega-events, such as the Olympic Games, has focused primarily on the commercial development opportunities that events offer. According to O'Brien (2006), strategic business leveraging requires the formation of inter-organizational relationships that will derive from the development of business networks and the fostering of relationships between actors. O'Brien emphasizes that the institutionalization of the entities involved in the business network is a means that would help the establishment of relationships between those entities and actors in order to



co-ordinate leveraging activities. Therefore, the creation of a coordinating organization seems to be a major task for communities if they want to effectively leverage their activities.

Yet, longitudinal research on sport tourism policy by Weed (2003) in UK showed that it is difficult for the sport and tourism domains to be synergized and develop joint activities because of the different organizational cultures and innate fragmentation. In the context of event leveraging where a plethora of stakeholders exist, such collaboration seems to be challenging. Despite the innate difficulties, Jamal and Getz (1995) suggested that collaboration theory provides useful guidance on how to foster inter-organizational relationships in the context of community tourism planning by developing common objectives and coordinating their activities at the local level.

Therefore, local coordination of event leverage seems to be a critical factor in the implementation of such activities. As Sack and Johnson (1996) showed in their study of the Volvo tournament, central government may have parochial interests, which can create obstacles in the successful coordination of event stakeholders at the local level. For this reason, it seems that a local coordinating organization would more effectively undertake the task of bringing the event stakeholders to the same table and designing common leveraging strategies. This seems to be an important factor that can enable a host community to leverage all its small and larger sport and cultural events for economic and social development.

O'Brien and Gardiner (2006) examined how relationship marketing, specifically networking, was used to create sustainable event impacts in the context of pre-event training for the Sydney 2000 Olympics. They concluded that event outcomes should take into account the relational outcomes that provide opportunities for on-going economic

impact such as improved opportunities for tourism, investment and trade relations. In this regard, they supported that the event itself is not the intervention rather it represents a temporally limited set of opportunities to foster and nurture the desired long-term relationships and impacts. From this standpoint, the issue for sport tourism policy and marketing is the efficacy with which the host destination's product and service mix is employed to enhance the event's impacts (Chalip, 2006). The host destination's assets and resource capacity of the host community determines of course the aforementioned efficacy. Subsequently, it would make sense that events are tailored according to the assets, resources and capacity of the host community. This realization along with the negative impacts caused by events, raised concerns over the efficacy of mega-events in generating the proclaimed and desired outcomes.

For example, Burbank et al. (2002) discussed the mega-event strategy that entails the quest for a high-profile event to serve as a stimulus to, and justification for, local development based on the promise of worldwide attention paid by corporate sponsorship that is a suitable vehicle for place promotion, city image-making and tourism development. However, they contended that major events cannot be organized at the expense of the local community nor should they be planned without proper grassroots consultations.

In fact, as Garcia (2004) articulated, the argument that local groups can benefit from mega events through tourism, inward investment and short-term job creations is not sufficient. In particular, she explained first that satisfying tourism interests may be in direct contradiction to the traditions of the place and may affect its natural environment; second that inward investment is beneficial as long as it protects the interests and rights of the community, which requires a careful balance between corporate competitiveness

and the survival of public provisions; and lastly the creation of jobs is positive, but only sustainable if it involves a degree of skill development and improved access to future employment.

In contrast to the logic of mega-event strategy, Higham (1999) suggested that small scale-sports events such as international sporting mixtures of ice hockey, basketball, soccer, rugby leagues, etc., domestic competitions, Masters or disabled sports and the like, might result in more positive effects for host communities. This is because, as Higham explained, small-scale sports events usually operate within existing infrastructures, require minimal investments of public funds, are more manageable in terms of crowding and congestion compared to hallmark events, and seem to minimize the effects of seasonality. Thus, Higham (1999) emphasized that it is important to recognize the need to attract or develop sporting events that complement the scale, infrastructure and resource capabilities of the host city.

In this regard, a focus on small-scale events by a number of authors, accentuate the potential that an event portfolio can have in terms of tourism and economic development. Gibson, Willming, and Holdnak (2003) showed in a study of college football that fans traveling to attend their teams engage in traditional tourism behavior and spending. Also, Higham and Hinch (2002) in a study of rugby season in New Zealand showed the potential of adapting the rugby season in off-tourism periods in order to overcome tourism seasonality.

Getz (1997) in supporting the value of an event portfolio stated that social elements when organizing different events should be taken into consideration in order to enrich the core product of an event and appeal to a wide range of consumers. In this regard, Green and Chalip (1998) in a study of football subculture in a women's football

event in Key West showed that events should provide opportunities for participants to instantiate a valued and shared identity. In particular, they suggested that event design should include opportunities for participants to parade, celebrate and affirm their sub-cultural identity, create stories to cultivate an on-going event culture, or design formats to accommodate skill-oriented versus image-oriented teams (Green & Chalip, 1998). This highlights the utility of leveraging event consumers' identification with the sport's subculture when promoting sport events (Green, 2001).

Another aspect that has recently received attention is nostalgia as an element that can be leveraged in events and sport tourism (Fairley, 2003). According to Fairley and Gammon (2005) past experiences with sport and tourism are linked to an individual's personal and social identities. In this respect, they suggest that sport tourism need not be restricted to nostalgia that is generated by only attractions or objects but also that can be generated by wanting to relive a social experience. Nostalgia can act as motive, as socialization and forms an integral part of the norms and rituals of various social worlds (Fairley & Gammon, 2005). Thus, the search of people for sporting experiences associated with the past it could be leveraged by event organizers and host communities. Nostalgic elements in events could be added or nostalgic events could be created as part of an event portfolio. This could enhance the meaning of events, their appeal to market segments and cultivate continuities among events.

All the above have clear implications for how the core product of events is envisioned, and they suggest ways for augmenting events in order to appeal to market segments that otherwise may not be reached. In the context of an event portfolio, the incorporation of social elements in different events is particularly important in revealing ways that synergies between sport and cultural events may be created or enhanced. Sport

events may be augmented with cultural activities such as festivals and rituals and vice versa, in order to enrich the overall reach of events to consumers. Garcia (2001) is one of the main proponents supporting that synergies between sport and cultural events can be a useful tool in event marketing. In the context of Olympic Games, she showed that synergies may be fostered if relationships between sport and the arts entities and/or stakeholders are enhanced and there is common event programming.

In terms of sport tourism development, bundling can create opportunities to cross-leverage attractions and sport activities at the destination (Harrison-Hill & Chalip, 2005). Chalip and McGuirly (2004) demonstrated that a mixed-bundling strategy should be used to incorporate sport events more strategically into the host destination's overall mix of tourism products and services and appeal to several different segments of sport tourists. Bringing the sport and its host destination together into a bundle adds value by augmenting and intensifying the sport tourist's experience (Harrison-Hill & Chalip, 2005).

In the context of an event portfolio, bundling may be used strategically to cross-leverage activities in different events and local attractions. The potential of bundling different events can add value to the destination by enriching, diversifying or differentiating its tourism product. The possibilities are wide and depend on the nature of the strategy a destination seeks to follow and the resources or unique characteristics it possesses. Bundling, hence, is a very useful tool not only in creating synergies between events and the destination but also amongst different events of the portfolio.

This requires the formation of alliances to plan and implement the necessary strategies (Harrison-Hill & Chalip, 2005). In this sense, horizontal channel alliances that increase the scale of similar activities and vertical channel alliances that link providers of

complementary services in the supply chain are critical in leveraging an event portfolio for sport tourism development and creating synergies among different events and stakeholders. The creation of such alliances could be encouraged and possibly enabled if event stakeholders had to operate in some arrangement supporting an event portfolio. The type of structures and/or informal arrangements is a topic that warrants future research. What is certain, however, is that such an arrangement would need to accommodate various interests, serve multiple purposes and distribute the benefits derived from events equally. In this regard, social planning policy in events is necessary if a host community intends to leverage an event portfolio.

### **Social Leverage of Events and Sport Tourism**

The worldwide growth of events and their use predominantly for generating economic outcomes have shifted recently the attention of event organizers and host community residents to the social value of events. In response, an emerging number of researchers argue that social impacts of events need concerted attention so that their social value can be maximized and the causes of social problems they create to be minimized (Burbank et al., 2001; Deccio & Baloglu, 2002; Delamere, Wankel, & Hinch, 2001; Delamere, 2001; Fredline & Faulkner, 2001; Fredline, Jago, & Deery, 2003; Roche, 2000; Kim & Uysal, 2003). Also, the potential of sport events to create community networks and social capital has begun to be addressed (Misener & Mason, 2006).

The social value that events create is grounded on the development of a heightened sense of community, which through celebration, enjoyment and performance brings people from different social groups together. Anthropological research defined as liminal the events that provide a communal space where event participants share an

overtly sacred experience (Turner, 1984). When this experience occurs in a secular space, it is defined as liminoid. The sense of communal bonding and camaraderie suspending normal social rules and boundaries that is engendered within those spaces was defined by Turner (1974) as *communitas*. On this basis, event organizers and host communities may capitalize on liminality and *communitas* in order to strategically plan for events to derive social outcomes.

Yet, there is a dearth of research in the sport and event management literature for the potential of social leverage of sport or other special events. The predominant focus on economic outcomes and marketing uses of events has not encouraged scholars in the discipline to explore the strategic ways that the social value of the events can be strategically leveraged for meaningful community development. This is especially the case in event sport tourism where the tourism visitation of event participants and attendants is viewed solely through the prism of economic determinism. This is a serious omission for sport tourism development because it does not suggest ways for the integration of sport and special events in a sustainable development framework that considers the social and environmental uses of events.

Similarly, an interesting phenomenon that has not yet received attention in sport and event management research is the cultural invention in the guise of urban or rural revitalization through the creation of events or festivals. In this case the value that events derive is as much social as economic. Sport is blended with cultural traditions creating a sense of continuity with the past and a sense of stability through time. These sentiments are especially important in disadvantaged areas or communities, which face depression. In this regard sport, culture, history and entertainment can be blended to deliver a social experience to local people such as celebrating local identity and shared values and in turn

they can be used as a marketing tool to enhance the image of the host community and attract tourist visitation. It is obvious, therefore, that there is a potential for integrating social and economic development within a sport tourism framework and the strategic planning of event portfolios may be the mechanism to achieve such integration.

Towards this end the creation of liminality in events that offer uniquely sacred or affective experiences has a critical role in sport tourism. Such experiences can be sport-focused only or sport-related blended with cultural activities. This purports for considering not only the potential for creating synergies between sport and cultural events but also at a more fundamental level planning in unison sport tourism and community development and synergistically leveraging sport and cultural events.

Chalip (2006) is the first scholar in the sport and event management field who calls for shifting attention to the social leverage of sport events. He suggests that the celebratory nature of events engenders a liminoid space that can foster social value, particularly through a sense of *communitas*. Rather than relying on serendipitous processes expecting events to derive social benefits, strategic planning could be applied to design and produce certain beneficial social outcomes. In this respect, Chalip (2006) suggests a framework for the social leverage of sport events. In this framework in order to enable and amplify liminality and *communitas*, the suggested objectives for event organizers and host community planners are to foster social interaction and prompt a feeling of celebration. The suggested strategies are the following: enabling sociability among event visitors, creating event-related social events, facilitating informal social opportunities, producing ancillary events, and theming widely.

According to this framework, narratives, symbols, meanings, and emotional impact can be designed so that they facilitate the creation and enhancement of liminality



and *communitas*. Their social leverage may address the particular issues or needs of a host community such as social issues, build networks, and empower community action. As Chalip notes, the above social outcomes may be furthered when the arts are used to complement sport, and when commercial elements support social leverage. The enormous variety of different contexts and events, however, challenges the development of a comprehensive and coherent approach by which seemingly antithetical components (e.g., commercialization versus social focus, sport spectacle versus arts' intellectuality, etc.) can be combined. Clearly, more research is needed to elucidate the ways that social leverage can integrate sport and arts events as well as event commercialization and social development.

In this regard, it would be useful to look back at the origins of sport and refine our conceptual frameworks when thinking about events. For example, the closeness of art and sport was revealed by the nature of the athletic competitions in ancient Greece, which were celebrations of both sporting and artistic achievements such as poetry, music, sculpture and architecture (Hawhee, 2004; Larmour, 1999). Gymnastics and calisthenics invoked admiration and aesthetic appreciation for the physical build, prowess and “*aretē*” (virtue) displayed by participants. The modern term “art” as skill, is related to this ancient Greek term “*aretē*.” The fact that art is so close to sports is related to the nature of sports that exemplify aesthetic values of ability, skill, and style demonstrated through performance. Also, a relationship existed between Greek athletics and Greek drama with the agonistic character of both athletic and dramatic activities that constructed sports as theatrical displays (Larmour, 1999). Therefore, sport and the arts derive from an identical conceptual foundation and it is rather a matter of thematic and programmatic planning to reconnect them for the purpose of achieving meaningful community development.

While the aforementioned framework for the social leverage of events is a seminal foundation, it should be noted that community development entails more complex processes that may have ambivalent results even when strategic leveraging applied. For example, exploitation of proclaimed social benefits to communities such as civic esteem, social inclusion, identity, etc., are often merely legitimizations of elites (Sack & Johnson, 1996; Whitson & Macintosh, 1996), which use events to maintain their hegemonic status. What seems to lie behind such use of events is the maintenance of a host community's predominant social order. Parochial interests prevail and discrimination is maintained at the expense of the weaker social groups. For this reason, if it is to approach social leverage comprehensively the processes for the development and maintenance of social order of a host community must be considered as they influence and in turn influenced by the events. Also, the intent and authenticity of event elements must be questioned whether contributes to diachronic social relationships and the creation of a meta-culture or they are byproducts of discursive regimes (Foucault, 1977) and hegemonic assimilationist discourse (Foley, 1995) that aim to maintain gender, race and class inequalities.

There is no doubt that social leverage is more intricate than mere economic planning of events for yielding economic benefits or promoting a destination. There is also no doubt that the proclaimed use of events for a range of pseudo social benefits has developed a diachronic suspicion over the actual potential of events to be used for social outcomes that will benefit an entire community. This is exactly the challenge and the potential for social leverage of events. If it starts being addressed and explored it might help us to move towards integrating sport and special events into a sound basis for the sustainable development of host communities. Sport tourism needs such a paradigm shift

in its route towards becoming a sustainable form of tourism. It seems that in the context of an event portfolio such a basis can be developed. For example, social leverage of events may use continuities to nurture connected sacredness among different events that will enable social interaction and a heightened sense of celebration to all the events of the portfolio. Similarly, social leverage through different events may address and improve the social issues that agonize a community. The affective meanings, symbols and narratives of events can convey messages capable to permeate through a series of events and enhance their impact on people.

In this regard, the theory of polysemic structures derived from anthropological research in events is essential in suggesting ways how common elements between sport and cultural events can be fostered. Chalip (1992) suggested that multiple narratives, genres, and symbols can be created and utilized in sport events to create an affective connection with consumers. These elements create polysemic structures allowing an event to cultivate a greater array of emotions and meanings for participants (Harrison-Hill & Chalip, 2005). In this respect, narratives can be created to supply stories about the event, genres such festivals or rituals can augment and appeal emotionally to event participants and attendants, and symbols can create and convey shared meaning for event patrons. Therefore, anthropological work in events is a key theoretical realm of knowledge that can contribute to the study of sport events and community development and thus pertinent literature is reviewed in the following section.

#### **EVENTS AS PERFORMATIVE GENRES**

Anthropological research has sought to identify common parameters of events paying attention to the cultural performance and expressive practices that events seem to

have. The theoretical underpinnings of this line of research are based primarily on work by Turner (1974, 1982, 1984) and Geertz (1973). In particular, Turner emphasized the necessity for cognitive and emotional experience that can be known to people only through the doing and the enactment of dramatic performance. Geertz focused on the interpretive reading of meaning that events provide or make accessible to their participants who through these narratives interpret their order of things.

The term “performative genres” has been introduced by anthropologists to denote the cultural performances and modes of exhibition or presentation that are organized and delivered in the modern world in the form of public events. Turner (1974, 1984) suggested that performative genres can be conceptualized as commentaries and critiques on, or as celebrations of, different dimensions of human relatedness. In this respect, he contended, that genres as ritual, ceremonial, carnival, festival, games, spectacles, and sport events may constitute on various levels and in various verbal and nonverbal codes, a set of meta-languages whereby a group of community not merely expresses itself but, more actively, tries to understand itself in order to change itself.

Albeit the diversity of all the aforementioned cultural performances ranging from arts and rituals to sports seems to make a common understanding of them inconclusive at a first glance, Turner identified that the dialectic between flow and reflexivity is their common characteristic since they all have at some extent a reflexive aspect providing thus an opportunity for participants to flow in unison even when the terms of interaction are antagonistic.

Central to this analysis is the position that performative genres are forms of social drama culturally elaborated in different ways in diverse societies. Turner (1984) asserted that in any event the social drama is the major form of plural reflexivity in human social

action. Event dramaturgy is based on an imaginative range of ideas, which often drive participants in genre performances to display individual virtuosity in the symbols they select and in ways in which they control the proceedings and the actors. The creation of dramaturgy is often facilitated by liminality and associated *communitas*. In order to understand event meanings that are extracted by dramaturgy events can be interpreted as dramatic stories. Each of the above is analyzed in the following sections.

### **Liminality and Communitas**

Turner (1974) described that it is a characteristic of all liminal or liminoid processes or states that in them the factors of culture are deconstructed and often recombined in fantastic ways. For this reason, liminality is based on subjunctive mood, contrasting with the indicative mood of everyday socioeconomic life. Turner defined liminality as any condition of time and space outside or on the peripheries of everyday life wherein normal social rules and boundaries are suspended. The concept of liminality is fundamental for designing and delivering a sacred, reflexive and affective experience in events. Hence, a thorough understanding by sport and event managers of how to create and in turn leverage liminality is needed.

In particular, Turner explained that the tribal-traditional rituals can be described as liminal events where there is seclusion and austere conformity to a ritualistic behavior, while the post-tribal-modernist events (festivals, sports, parades, dance, etc.) can be described as liminoid (liminal-like) since they are characterized by optation rather than obligation, individual rather than collective authorship, and secular rather than sacred settings and goals. Turner underlined that the liminoid is more flexible and multifarious than the liminal, which is bounded more firmly by ritual constraints (taboos and rubrics).

Liminal or liminoid states of events may have derivative social value for host communities outside the limited event context. By enabling meaningful social interaction among people without imposing social boundaries, liminality may enhance social networks and strengthen the social fabric of a community. For example, anthropological research demonstrated that ritual festivals in the Hinterland of Gold Coast featuring ceremonies and dance served as a mechanism of social cohesion for the host communities. Integration was engendered and maintained a balance between opposed groups by overriding thus the tendencies for conflict inherent in the system (Fortes, 1936). Similarly, an anthropological study on the fiesta complex in an Indian community of Ecuador demonstrated that dyadic relationships of trust and continuity are established, reaffirmed and enacted in the context of family festivals (Walter, 1981). Moreover, this study illustrated that the fiesta complex is an arena in which individual interests coincide and compete, and alliances are centered on the more prosperous individuals who act as factions. In other words, the social order is constructed and maintained through an adaptive strategy, which encourages cooperation and generalized reciprocity within one's personal network or alliance and competition between alliances or factions (Walter, 1981).

Liminality provides a secure temporal space within which controversial social and political issues can be metaphorically addressed and discussed. This facilitates dramaturgy and the meanings that are extracted from events. For example, a study on the liminoid character of cricket festivals in the Caribbean illustrated that liminality serves as an opportunity to symbolically delve into the political economy of Caribbean life (Manning, 1981). Similarly, anthropological studies in other contexts and genres showed the use of liminality as a sacred space for meaningful symbolic discourse such as

carnivals in the Caribbean (Ho, 2000) and festivals in Latin America (Rasnake, 1986; Mathews-Salazar, 2006).

The construction, cultivation and confirmation of collective identity with resonance to a host community's social context, is a focal meaning that liminal states help to engender in diverse locations and events. For example, rodeo events by virtue of their structure, their movement between the liminal and the normal (in and out of society) enable American men to relive and transcend the sacrifices of individuality required by conventional modern life (Errington, 1990). Similarly, a traditional football festival in England serves as an occasion to reaffirm community by celebrating a sense of local identity (McCabe, 2006). Another festival consisted of four days of sports performances and two nights of cultural performances in Thailand mobilizes an identity that defines a minority in national terms (Jonsson, 2003). Festivals in Virgin Islands (Choen, 1998) and Sardinia (Azara & Crouch, 2006) are occasions where national identities and differences are explored. Flamenco event performances in Andalusian culture are contested measures of social identity where event attendees negotiate their differences from other groups (Papapavlou, 2003). A folklore festival in Bolivia moves from simply representing differences, but teaching local people their culture so that they are being prepared to take part in the multi-ethnic composition of Bolivia (Rockefeller, 1999). A ritual festival in Nepal featuring the creation and performance of novel songs by Hindu women before the entire community has become a crucial space for the cultivation of feminine subjectivities protesting against the patriarchal ideology that dominates women's lives (Holland & Skinner, 1995). The liminal space of the festival enables critical voices to be developed through the collective processes of song composition and their enactment providing thus a critical female self-consciousness and a call for social action.

What lies at the core of every event is performance. Liminality is the spacio-temporal condition that surrounds the enactment of an event. Event participants are engaged in some type of performance in order to create, instantiate and share a meaning. As Handelman (1990) noted events are profoundly existential, since no event can exist substantively as a phenomenon apart from its practice, and thus, design and enactment are integral to one another. Liminality is part of the event design while performance is the actual praxis through which liminality is experienced and a sense of community is created in events.

A study by Kruckemeyer (2002) examined the conflicts and affiliations that produce and define community through performance. In particular, Kruckemeyer demonstrated the way group identity is constructed around a multifaceted notion of localness at a wood-chopping competition in northwestern Connecticut. She concluded that community identity is enacted at a referential level, which she described as meta-performance. This means that the celebration engaged in by men and women, primarily from other trades, mobilizes notions of logging tradition and history to enact a “local” community with resonance in their suburban, postindustrial context. It seems that meta-performance can be an allegorical means that links traditional life with modern events giving the opportunity for people to reconstruct and rediscover their history and identity. In this regard, the building of community can take sacred dimensions and enhance integral liminality in events that feature referential performance through a series of events with resonance to cultural and historic context of the host community.

In the context of Olympic Games, McAloon (1984) suggested that the Olympics represent a particular kind of cultural performance, what he called a ramified performance type. In particular, McAloon supported that the different genres are



complexly and intimately interconnected at many levels (i.e., historically, socially, functionally, performatively, etc.) and they act and react upon another constructing shared meaning and new versions of reality. MacAloon supported that the Olympics stand between the fragmentation of liminoidality into liminal genres and the development of neo-liminal genres out of the liminoid, which constitute the ramified performance types.

This view advocates for the potential of augmenting sport events with other genres (i.e., cultural performances, festivals) and create synergies among them. While MacAloon's focus was on Olympic Games, it is not hard to imagine how the ramified performance types could be strategically planned and implemented in the events of a host community's portfolio. It is at the event organizers' and host community's hands to design the atmosphere, identify themes, include common symbols, narratives and ancillary events in order to layer different genres and engender a heightened sense of celebration, sociability as well as shared meaning in the host community's events. For MacAloon, these events can be described as neo-liminal since they derive from liminoid genres but they take an immense significance and distinct form explained by MacAloon as ramified performance types.

In this context, Lewis and Dowsey-Magog (1993) in their study of the Maleny Fire Event, which is held annually at the climax of a large folk festival in Australia, concluded that the unusual degree of participatory interaction combined with a shared belief system constitutes a neo-liminal framework creating an initial consensus of a festival atmosphere which has the properties of pretypifying and inducing fitting actions. In other words, they advocated that the revitalization and recreation of rituals is now being seen as a more or less constant process in all cultural worlds, although the pace of

change has arguably intensified under the influence of colonialism, modernization, and nationalism. Hermeneutically, therefore, the neologism (of the term) neo-liminality, although abstract, it can be heuristically useful in describing the development of genres that are ramified in form and can prompt meaningful collective action. It can also be used to distinguish the narrow effect a neo-liminal performative framework may have on large society as opposed to the integral and totalizing effect a liminal ritualized framework may have on small groups and traditional societies.

Yet, the concept of neo-liminality has not been embraced (and subsequently not defined) by anthropologists, probably because of its theoretical complexity and abstract nature. Some anthropological work brought attention to the creation of neo-liminal events broadly defined. In terms of structure, they call such events “in-between” meaning that they combine two genres forming a new one. In particular, Briggs and Bauman (1992) pointed out that genre categories always refer to a world of inter-textuality within which there are “gaps” between texts and between text tokens and types. It is precisely in these gaps, they argued, that genre categories function strategically, in a continual process of cultural construction and deconstruction whose essence is negotiation and struggle.

Lewis and Dowsey-Magog (1993) explained that this is reflected through the creation of new events that stand, for example, between ritual and theatre. Handelman (1990) described the relationship between play and ritual, which enhances complementary frames of meta-communication. Schechner (1985) noted this relation between modern secular ritual and performance, asserting that “There will be more in-between performative genres. In-between is becoming the norm: between literature and recitation; between religion and entertainment; between ritual and theater” (Schechner 1985, p. 322). The possibilities that in-between genres engender are numerous in terms of

expression, continuous creativity and exploration, critique of the conventional and search for a truth that underlies the human need to enact in events. From this standpoint, in-between events compose an amalgamation of symbolic expression that gets manifested with resonance to the social order and how people perceive reality.

In this context, genre frames, which typify cultural performance events, may represent occasions for which several genre categories might be appropriate to different views and/or at different moments (MacAloon, 1984). This is a programmatic perspective for in-between events and future research in this area can suggest ways for designing event augmentations and creating synergies between the different genres. What is a constant of liminality whether in in-between liminoid or liminal events is the creation of a secure space where otherwise contentious issues can be signified, addressed, discussed, and contested. As the anthropological literature clearly demonstrates event liminality enables metaphoric discourse (e.g., Cohen, 1998; Errington, 1990; Ho, 2000; Manning, 1981; Mathews-Salazar, 2006; Rasnake, 1986) whereby event participants and attendees can be engaged in conversations that are ostensibly about the event, but that also explore concerns of social, political, and existential nature.

A seminal concept associated with liminality is that of *communitas*, which was introduced by Turner (1974, 1984). In particular, Turner suggested that performative genres, which are characterized by liminality may engender *communitas*, meaning that event participants create a shared meaning and reconstruct social reality without racial, ethnic or linguistic boundaries. This takes place in the liminal or liminoid out-of-time experience of an event. During such periods there is a temporary distancing from everyday life, often indicated by an absence of everyday rules and social status differences, which allows event participants to treat one another as social equals.

Communitas, therefore, can be understood as a form of anti-structure fostering unmediated communication between definite identities and arising spontaneously in all kinds of groups, situations and circumstances (Turner 1974, 1984). McAloon (1984) supported that the Olympics represent an example of communitas, which gives the freedom to participants to connect with each other. Communitas is critical if sport and cultural events are to be leveraged for social development in order to instantiate shared meaning and engender opportunities for meaningful participatory inter-connectedness.

Another seminal example of communitas studied in the anthropological literature is the event of sled dog racing. This is constructed as a liminal experience wherein outside roles and statuses connected with class and gender in larger society are not operative and are leveled so that an alternative moral order emerges that comprises the communitas (Kemp, 1999). Although the race embodies mainstream American values of individualism and competition it is constructed in such a way that it subordinates competitiveness to a celebration of cooperation (Kemp, 1999). It must be noted that in a similar fashion, it has been shown in the anthropological literature that rodeos (by not necessarily creating communitas) encompass manifestations of competitive individualism and cooperation (Errington, 1990), hence resolving the existential issue concerning the relationship of the individual to society. It seems that the integration of individualism and community appears to be accomplished through periodic public performances (Warner, 1952). Liminality and communitas may facilitate such a process but they do not constitute the exclusive conditions under which this process is accomplished. Research needs to examine from this perspective different events in different contexts. The implication of such an inquiry would be to delineate the esoteric logic that permeates (or

could connect) a series of events in a host community and whether or not this logic is compatible with fostering liminality and *communitas*.

*Communitas* should not be confused with the sense of community developed through events. The latter does not always encourage meaningful reflexivity, interaction and bonding in events. This depends on arrangements in the social order that prevail and influence the organization of events. For example, the festival of nations in Rock Creek, Montana develops a sense of community by proclaiming that the host community has achieved a concord in terms of neighborliness and thus it constitutes an explicit model for national and international relationships. As Errington (1987) demonstrates, this view is a misreading of local people's own history and precludes an understanding of the community's real position to the world by deflecting reflexivity from the crucial problems of the present and turns attention to an issue that is not anymore relevant.

Overall, in order to cultivate liminality and engender *communitas* the logic of events should enable the suspension of social conventions, norms, boundaries and rules that inhibit the development of meaningful social interaction among people who belong to distinct groups. Although events can connect groups of people that might not otherwise come together, this is not evidence of liminality and associated *communitas*. Rather it depends on the predominant arrangement of a community's social order what the shared meaning will be, what the event purports to be, and how it will seek to affect the community as a whole. Liminality and the associated *communitas* are the means and consequently it is in a host community's hands to employ them and structure events in ways that foster liminal or liminoid states. For this reason, the study of event leverage needs to probe not only on the objectives and means to achieve social leverage of events but also on the factors that influence the goals and might benefit factions and how the

implementation of social leverage strategies affect the community as a whole. Since the organization of events is a constant negotiation of a number of interests and sometimes antithetical values, events and their potential for social leverage have to be rethought and interpreted in relation to a host community's social order.

### **Events as Dramatic Stories**

Geertz's work on events emphasized the interpretive role of events for people and communities at large. In particular, Geertz (1973) argued that symbols make up a culture and their uniqueness can be seen through the expression of social behavior. In this context, events are spaces denoting something outside themselves, and providing conduits for the production and expression of symbols. It is important here to clarify the term symbol. Symbols are objects, characters, or other concrete representations of ideas, concepts, or other abstractions. The word "symbol" came from the Greek "σύμβολον" (sýmbolon), which etymologically derived from the root words συν- (syn-) meaning "together" and "βολή" (bolē) "a throw" having the approximate meaning of "to throw together." Originally a symbol was a token, the present half of a broken table or medal or coin that performed its social and semiotic function by recalling the absent half to which it could have been potentially reconnected (Eco, 1984). Thus, the term symbol connotes "to bring together" or "to come together" and since it was conceived of as the representation of the important, yet not existing in concrete actuality, it could also denote the invisible appearing in the visible, the abstract in the real evoking or bringing into being something absent (Handelman, 1990). In other words, the relational quality between certain components, which are present and absent constitute the symbolic structure of events.

According to Geertz, all social interaction is symbolic and meaning is derived from how these symbols are constructed and put to use. In his seminal study of Balinese cockfight, Geertz in a celebrated aphorism, stated that cockfight “is a Balinese reading of Balinese experience, a story they tell themselves about themselves” (1973, p. 448). Further, Geertz concluded that what sets the cockfight apart from the ordinary course of life and surrounds it with an aura of enlarged importance is the interpretive function of providing a meta-social commentary upon the whole matter of assorting human beings into fixed hierarchical ranks and then organizing the major part of collective existence around that assortment. On the basis of this interpretive analysis, events can be understood as an analogy to tribal and traditional events.

In an extension of this line of research, Handelman (1990) provided a notable analysis of public events stressing their continuities and analogies as between events in pre-modern and modern forms of society. In particular, Handelman theorized public events as dense concentrations of symbols, locations of communication that convey participants into versions of social order, and their mandate is to engage in the ordering of ideas, people and things. Handelman also provided the following typology of public events that helps us to have a holistic understanding of their roles and meaning in societies:

- Events that model the lived-in world: they make a transformation happen that affects directly social orders.
- Events that present the lived-in world: they hold up a mirror to social orders and reflect versions of the latter.

- Events that represent the lived-in world: they offer propositions and counterpropositions about the understanding, construction or reconstruction of social orders.

Handelman (1990) explained that his position for the above typology is closer to a technology of events for the identification of logics of their design, which are embedded in cultural patterns and imbue these designs with significance. These designs are never static, nor complete in themselves. They are configurations that potentially enable social orders to act upon or to relate to themselves in radically different ways. Thus, for Handelman all the above three types of events are ways of signifying order in the worlds of their participants. Events of presentation are the dominant forms of occasion that publicly enunciate and index lineaments of statehood, nationhood, and civic collectivity presenting ideal patterns of social life. The vast majority of the modern world events can be classified as events of presentation dealing with the substantiation of affirmation and providing axiomatic icons of versions of social realities. Events-that-model are found mostly in traditional societies where events had the capacity to transform tribal social orders, while events that re-present are found in the modern world, though not very often, and do work of comparison and contrast in relation to social realities.

An example of a genre that re-presents the lived-in world is carnival. DaMatta (1984) in his study of the Brazilian carnival demonstrated the inversion phenomenon by showing how the carnival redefines the social world and how the dislocation of objects (social roles and values) from one domain to another interpolate, invert and reinforce the routine in rituals. In this context, the carnival offers propositions and counterpropositions about the understanding, construction or reconstruction of social orders. The aim is in Brazilian carnival, as DaMatta concluded, a search for consistency that in fact is never



obtained in real life but in ritual is accomplished through the idealized versions of the social world. DaMatta (1984) also noted that for this reason rituals demand preparation as do spectator sports, cinema and theater identifying another parallel among all diverse performative genres.

The above analysis clearly provides the conceptual basis for the understanding of events as dramatic stories that provide liminal experiences to the event participants, and convey particular meanings for a community constructing or reaffirming its cultural identity. This understanding can guide and facilitate event managers and host communities to cultivate the sets of symbols, narratives and ancillary events that are appropriate to the design of an event portfolio and pertinent strategies for achieving social outcomes. The conceptualization of events as dramatic stories can also provide a basis for the generation of synergies between sport and cultural events enabling on the one hand multiple expressions and on the other hand nurturing conceptual continuities among them (e.g., through the use of symbols, themes, narratives).

Events as dramatic stories can also be references to seminal or crucial moments of human life. In this regard, anthropological research paid attention on the evident lack of rituals associated with crucial moments of human life passage events in the post-industrial westernized world, as the way of life is characterized mainly by individualism, rationalism and economic determinism. Myerhoff (1982) suggested that the construction of such rituals can help handle human and cultural crises. For her there is clearly a profound therapeutic value in the recognition and ritualization of recurrent problems involved in the maintenance and repair of human relationships and in assigning meaning to what subjectively may seem to be merely pain and loss. Similarly, Kitazawa (1992)

supported the need for regeneration of the collective imaginary through performance in event rituals as an antidote to postmodern anomie.

For example, rites of passage in terms of using events to achieve social purposes can be employed by event managers to address the transitions of athletes and contribute to sport development. In particular, rites of passage can be created in the form of special events in order to recognize, assist and possibly alleviate athletes in their transitions. In case of traumatic transitions such as injuries or retirement, rites of passage can have a therapeutic value for those athletes and at the same moment they can suggest the need for sport systems to make the necessary provisions to aid athletes in the declining phases of their careers. On the other hand, athletic advancement to excellence can be celebrated to establish exemplar paradigms and provide official recognition of achievement. In addition, rites of passage can be used as ancillary events or embedded in large-scale events such as festivals to signify and symbolically explore phases of human or social transitions that concern a host community.

Therefore, although anthropologists do not provide a functional analysis in terms of the ways events can be utilized, anthropological work on events may ignite and inform our thinking in regards with the potential of social uses of events. In particular, Turner's dramatological perspective and Geertz's interpretive one, illustrate that a series of events can contribute to social development of a host community by providing opportunities for event participants and attendees to share liminal or liminoid experiences and their associated meanings; to create *communitas* and event participants to relate with each other without the boundaries of established social roles; to test, celebrate or reaffirm identity; to promote cultural ideology; to create and enhance social capital and strengthen thus the social fabric of the host community. In order to understand the potential for

practical implementation of using events to achieve social purposes, pertinent literature from leisure and community development is reviewed in the following section.

#### **LEISURE RESEARCH AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

Roche (2000) is one of the first scholars who adopted a multi-dimensional approach in his sociological analysis of mega-events and expos, proposing the need for a combination of dramatological and contextual perspectives in understanding the meaning and role of events in the shaping of structure, change and agency in modern society. He asserted that events like the Olympics along with the event-based aspects of other genres such as film, music, and sport provide ordinary people with opportunities to connect with and affirm or contest collective identities. This integrated perspective on events provides the basis for the understanding of the different meanings and roles that events can have in a community.

Events of course are leisure practices. Sport and event management research needs to examine the conceptual frameworks of leisure studies and be informed about significant findings that have practical implications for the event industry and policy. The study of event planning requires integration with disciplines that are related to the planning purposes such as economic or community development. Especially since an event portfolio encompasses a wide range of leisure practices with the potential of multiple policy purposes, it requires studying in concert the pertinent disciplines that ground and inform this endeavor. Leisure research provides a context for connecting both conceptually and functionally an event portfolio with community development.

## **Leisure Research and Communitarianism**

Leisure research, along with the search for connections to other drivers of regeneration in the social and economic levels, has sought to understand the meanings and roles of leisure practices for individuals and communities. Recently this line of inquiry shifted gradually its attention towards the role of leisure practices in generating, maintaining and enhancing social capital. For example, leisure researchers started to ponder what community development means for recreation and leisure (Pedlar, 1996). This has led to a recent focus on attempting to conceptualize and locate leisure in the social capital literature (Glover & Hemingway, 2005). Rojek's action approach to leisure research (Rojek, 2005) shifted the gaze of leisure researchers toward the roles of leisure forms and practices in enhancing social capital and active citizenship (Glover & Hemingway, 2005). Also, Warde, Tampubolon, and Savage's (2005) study on informal social networks and implications for social capital in the UK highlights the role of sociability around recreational practices for building social capital.

Similarly, recent research on tourism has started to address the informal networks of tourists and the social capital that is built through traveling. In particular, Larsen, Urry, and Axhausen (2007) argue that research on tourism has neglected issues of sociality and corporeal co-presence and thereby overlooked how more and more tourism is concerned with (re)producing social networks, with (re)visiting and receiving the hospitality of friends and kin living elsewhere and fulfilling social obligations. The authors document that tourism entailing traveling, visiting and hosting are necessary to social life conducted at-a-distance is not an isolated exotic island but a significant set of relations connecting and reconnecting "disconnected" people in face-to-face proximities where obligations and pleasures can go hand in hand (Larsen et al., 2007). This aspect needs to be

considered in the context of sport tourism and event portfolio planning, which tends to view the social value of events mainly through the practice of sport participation. The practice of traveling in itself can derive social value and thus event managers and host communities need to know how to cross-leverage it along with other components.

The most compelling and influential argument was made by Arai and Pedlar (2003) who provided a critical analysis for moving beyond individualism in leisure by employing the concepts of community and social engagement. They proposed a communitarian conception of leisure and used the notion of social capital to examine the potential contributions of community structures to social cohesion, trust, mutuality, co-operation and openness. This perspective strove to redefine the role of leisure in community development and provoked a discourse over the conception of leisure as consumption versus leisure as shared values.

In the context of community development, the pertinence of the communitarian perspective is critical in fostering relationships and social networks for the development of common well-being. A central tenet of communitarianism is that people in (post)-modern societies should move beyond individualism and conspicuous consumption and engage in social activities of shared meaning that will promote justice, mutuality and cooperation (Etzioni, 1995; McIntyre, 1992). In this respect, it is suggested that leisure practices provide the means to create shared meaning and communities of celebration (Borgmann, 1992). Participation in communities of celebration entails people coming together in sports, festivals, hobbies, volunteering and the arts and finding in these leisure activities common and public goods (Arai & Pedlar, 2003). Trust and co-operation can be nurtured through the participation in cultural activities, from group dancing to songfests, to community theatre, to rap festivals (Putnam, 2001). On this basis, participation in

events is crucial for the social development of a community, enhancement of social networks and social capital.

Despite the fact that the communitarian approach denounces a priori the commercialization of leisure practices, it may suggest ways that sport and cultural events can be combined and utilized for the common good and social development of a community. Sport and event management is predominantly focused on the commercialization aspects of sport events and it would enrich its sophistication by developing a balanced approach on commercialization and social aspects of events. The study of event portfolio planning brings this need in light. Clearly, a more integrated approach is needed in the area of event planning in viewing sport and cultural events as a means to build social capital for both economic and social development.

Thus, although there is not research yet done in sport and event management from this perspective, it is important to consider the potential utility of an event portfolio in creating a community of celebration. In this sense, the social development of a host community can be based around those focal practices, which will combine the different elements of sports and other cultural performances (e.g., enhancing what connects and not what separates the groups of people who belong to the different communities) and the different genres can provide opportunities for people to connect and create shared meaning as well as build social capital.

The literature on social capital links network analysis to the discussion of values and ideology and thus provides a powerful construct for looking at the consequences or outcomes of the interrelationships among social actors (Arai & Pedlar, 2003). Within a communitarian framework, social capital places an emphasis on cooperation and reciprocity. Putnam (1995) defined social capital as the features of social life (networks,

norms, and trust) that enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives. Newton (1997) supported that social capital constitutes a force that helps to bind society together by transforming individuals from self-seeking and egocentric calculators into members of a community with shared interests, shared assumptions about social relations and a sense of the common good.

In this context, leisure research poses provoking questions that challenge the nature of social capital and its potential benefits. For example, it emphasizes the existence of inequalities in the distribution of social capital (Glover, 2004) and its relevance to policy (Blackshaw & Long, 2005). The debate about leisure and social capital persists and it seems that the interest in social capital continues to build among leisure research (Glover & Hemingway, 2005). In order to understand better the nature of this debate, the social capital theory is briefly reviewed in the following section.

### **Social Capital Theory**

The basis of social capital lies in the formation of trust and scholars identified two major types of trust that exist in communities with different culture. Individualistic communities tend to develop thin trust (Fukuyama, 1995; Newton, 1997) based on vertical relationships connected to economic outcomes, which produce weak ties, while less individualistic communities develop thick trust around focal realities and social cohesion within the community (Arai & Pedlar, 2003). Bourdieu (1985) who provided a profound and systematic analysis of social capital defined the concept as “the aggregate of the actual or potential resources, which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition” (p. 248). According to Bourdieu these relationships enable actors to claim access to resources that other groups possess and should be directed towards institutionalization to

ensure their sustainability. Bourdieu asserted that “the profits which accrue from membership in a group are the basis of the solidarity which makes them possible” (1985, p. 249). In this respect, social networks are not a natural given and must be constructed through investment strategies oriented to the institutionalization of group relations, usable as a reliable source of other benefits (Portes, 1998).

Portes (1998) explained that Bourdieu’s definition makes clear that social capital is decomposable into two elements: first, the social relationship itself that allows individuals to claim access to resources possessed by their associates, and second the amount and quality of those resources. In particular, Bourdieu’s central position is that through social capital, actors can gain direct access to economic resources, they can increase their cultural capital through contacts with experts or they can affiliate with institutions that confer valued credentials. Yet, although the outcomes of possession of social or cultural capital are reducible to economic capital, the processes that bring about these alternative forms are not, since they each possess their own dynamics characterized by less transparency and more uncertainty (Portes, 1998). This makes the formation of trust among actors a critical factor in exchange relationships and eventually on the development of social capital.

Similarly, in conceptualizing social capital, Coleman (1990) emphasized the social-structural resources that are embodied in relations among people. His functional approach highlighted two features of social structures as particularly important: closure, because it connects social actors in a network of obligations and corresponding sanctions; and appropriability, allowing an organization created for one purpose to be used for another. He regarded social capital as the by-product of purposive action intended to achieve other goals. Thus, as with Bourdieu, Coleman supported a view of social capital



as the cumulative resources developed through relationships and networks, which have purposive action and intend to achieve certain goals. However, a basic difference between them lies on the instrumental and collective roles of social capital. For Bourdieu it is a matter of individual gain while for Coleman it is a source of collective benefits. Despite this unresolved tension between these perspectives, the resource and structural view of social capital can provide the basis for explicating the role of an event portfolio as a strategic resource with the purpose to create or enhance the web of community networks. The focus of strategic event planning on social networks can be twofold: first in enabling social interaction and improving informal networks through the practice of events, and second in developing and maintaining an enduring network of event stakeholders that will collaborate in event hosting.

It is important, however, to recognize that the development of social capital may also have negative consequences such as exclusion of non-members or excessive claim of resources within the network. The understanding of negative social capital was explained by Portes (1998) who identified the following negative consequences: restricted access to opportunities, restrictions on individual freedom, excessive claims on group members and downward leveling norms. Furthermore, Portes (1998) explained that the instrumental motivation of actors defines the sources of reciprocity exchanges and enforceable trust that form social capital. In this case, exchange relationships are not based on mutual knowledge of the actors but on the insertion of both actors in a common social structure. Also, trust exists because obligations are enforceable, not through law or violence but through the power of the community. Instrumental sources of social capital should be distinguished from consummatory motivation when building relationships in a social network. Such sources are value introjection and bounded solidarity, which can ensure

norm observance, mutual understanding and support among actors and they can mediate the benefits for all within the network (Portes, 1998).

Social capital as a feature of communities and nations raised a controversy whether it should be treated as exogenous or endogenous. In particular, Jackman and Miller (1998) critiqued the exogenous treatment of social capital by theorists such as Putnam who view it as a reflection of enduring cultural norms. In this sense, civic culture is formed by the durable cultural norms, which drive political and economic performance. According to Jackman and Miller, the problem with this perspective is that subjective orientations and attitudes are considered more crucial than objective conditions embodied in institutions. Subjective attitudes are more resistant to change and preclude effective economic and political performance. In contrast, Jackman and Miller (1998) suggested that social capital should be viewed as the outcome of social and political arrangements and the critical question is which arrangements provide incentives for building trust. According to this perspective, trust is endogenized in the structure of a situation, social network or society at large.

The juxtaposition over the treatment of social capital as endogenous or exogenous reflects the different conceptualizations of social capital, which lie at two related yet clearly distinct approaches (Woolcock, 2003). The first approach (resource approach) concentrates on the resources available to individuals in their social networks, while the second approach (civic approach) examines the types and extent of individual involvement in informal organizations and social structures. The resources approach places greater emphasis on social structures like networks and social roles. The civic approach turns to cultural norms like generalized trust and reciprocity (Glover & Hemingway, 2005).

The problem for leisure researchers lies in the difficulty to specify the mechanisms by which social capital can be transferred from leisure to civic settings (Glover & Hemingway, 2005). While this question still needs research, it seems that anthropological work demonstrates that events have the potential to be mechanisms for the transferability of social capital to civic settings. The study of strategic event planning may shed light on this area, especially through an integrated perspective of event portfolio planning. Glover and Hemingway (2005) note that leisure can be a significant arena for the sociability on which social capital depends, and can be as purposive as other forms of activity providing opportunities for more unfettered social interaction, the creation of potentially richer social ties in which social capital can be generated. This is in accordance with Chalip's (2006) contention for enabling sociability and celebration in social event leverage in order to derive social value and enhance social capital. It also agrees with the communitarian perspective purporting that the sense of celebration can be a focal point where people create shared meaning.

Moreover, in terms of identifying mechanisms for creating and transferring social capital, from a planning community development perspective, Wilson's (1997) proposition is useful. In particular, she suggested an agenda for professional practice and academia in building social capital for economic and community development. This agenda rests on the values of trust and openness and embeds a set of tools, skills and sensitivities such as promoting stakeholder participation, measuring qualitative change and catalyzing inner development as well as group learning (Wilson, 1997). However, strategic event planning and a general planning agenda for building social capital need to consider the contextual particularities of host communities.

For example, Mohan and Mohan (2002) supported that in attempting to understand the nature of social capital it is important to recognize that its form will vary considerably depending on geographical and social context. This means that social capital is not a static and unchanging concept but it will vary considerably across space and time (Tonts, 2005). In this respect, Putnam's (2001) distinction between bridging and bonding social capital is particularly useful. Bonding social capital refers to trust and reciprocity within dense or closed networks while bridging social capital refers to wider overlapping networks that generate broader identities and reciprocity (Tonts, 2005). Recent research evidenced how sport creates or enhances bridging and bonding social capital.

In particular, Tonts (2005) in examining the role of sport in the formation of social capital in a rural community in Australia showed evidence that sport serves as a focal point of community life that brings people together and creates an opportunity for meaningful social interaction. The bonding social capital reinforces the sense of local pride and forms the basis of a tight knit community. Similarly, Tonts showed that sport has a significant part on building a degree of bridging social capital. In this regard, the networks that are created through sport can connect different social groups that might otherwise remain disconnected from one another. According to the results of this study, the importance of sport lies in providing a forum for social interaction, engagement and the formation as well as the maintenance of networks. In this respect, sport events can be conceptualized as nodes for local and regional networks. Such networks form the basis for both the creation and expression of social capital.

Although there is not substantial empirical evidence in the sport and event management literature evaluating the extent to which sport, or sport events in particular, create and enhance social capital, sport scholars appear to agree that the associational

nature of sports participation is sometimes seen as a forum for the creation of social capital (Jarvie, 2003). However, methodological sophistication should be applied in measuring and evaluating the social capital created by sport. The diversity of contexts (e.g., events, sport programs, etc.) and regional characteristics may reveal a number of factors and implications that impact on the formation of social capital through sport. Similarly, measurement and evaluation of social capital could be applied in the context of hosting event portfolios where the diversity of themes, performances and stakeholders' interests are in continuous interplay and relationships are more complex.

Furthermore, it is not clear from the literature how the spatial components of social capital influence the expression or maintenance of social networks. This begs for understanding the conditions under which social capital can be created in urban versus rural areas taking into account the particular resources of an area. A subsequent inquiry is the extent to which the different resources can be employed to create or enhance social networks in a host community. In the context of using events for community and sport tourism development it seems that an integrated (holistic) theoretical conceptualization that will inform strategic planning and policy-making should take into account the similarities and disparities of the regional characteristics between urban and rural areas.

Cultural planning for special events presents also significant spatial differentiations although a diachronic constant is its ambiguous and tumultuous relationship with sport. The potential for developing synergies with sport requires an understanding of the logics for cultural planning as it is conceived and manifested in different regions and affects community development. For this reason, literature on cultural planning for events as they pertain to community development is reviewed in the following section in order to explicate the potential for event portfolio synergies.

## **CULTURAL PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

It seems that the discourse on community development, social capital and focal leisure practices might ignite ways in which modern societies can stimulate collective action and reinstate civic engagement. Putnam (2001) offered some key ideas in the context of the renewal of social capital such as increasing participation in, rather than consumption and appreciation of cultural activities, from group dancing to songfests, to community theatre, to rap festivals so that communities can discover new ways to use the arts as a vehicle for convening diverse groups of fellow citizens. However, apart from the leisure discourse on community development, it seems that there are apparent impediments on the planning and implementation of leisure and cultural policy. The literature has identified three main problems, which are the following: (1) cultural consumption, (2) politics and commercialization, and (3) the use of the arts. Each is analyzed below.

### **Cultural Consumption**

First, there is the theoretical problem of conceptualizing and categorizing cultural consumption patterns so that cultural planning and policy can respond to the consumers' needs appropriately. Katz (2004) in his analysis of methodological and theoretical issues that arise in contemporary research of cultural consumption underscored the comparability of consumption indicators in the context of cross-national, cross-cultural, and longitudinal research and suggested that consumer culture research needs to further develop a series of theoretical questions, particularly those that acknowledge the significant social consequences of cultural consumption: the transition from production to consumption; cultural consumption and the social matrix; cultural consumption as a generative concept; multiple consumer identities; and cultural consumption as well as

cultural policy. Katz (2004) asserted that the shared emphasis of these theoretical questions is on locating the position of individuals on multidimensional hierarchies of consumption, thus facilitating conceptualization of lifestyle tribes, status groups, or taste communities as generators of values, attitudes, and behavior.

Katz (2004) also suggested that the most critical question is whether distinct cultural boundaries do exist. In other words, he wondered how strongly, in each society, the “cultural consumption principle” has become established as a mode of structuration and mobilization. Another important question for Katz concerns the distribution of cultural resources and the distinction between what individuals consume and how they consume: in private or in public, alone or with others, openly or secretly. It should be noted that the emphasis of this enquiry is on the meanings that individuals attach to their consumptive acts (i.e., normative, fulfilling, self-actualizing, or critical). On this basis, Katz (2004) concluded that there is a need for qualitative, detailed, and ethnographic research to provide interpretations of the meaning of consumption.

The realization of this potential begs that the fundamentally opposing notions of leisure as shared values and leisure as consumption should be reconciled and both synergistically represented in the policy agendas of local communities. This consideration can help frame festivities and communities of celebration, which can be linked with sport and at the same moment generate economic benefits through cultural, leisure or sport consumption.

### **Politics and Commercialization**

The second problem is the inclusion and influence of political and commercial interests in the planning and implementation of cultural events. For example, Mommaas (2004) in discussing the fairly recent phenomenon of cultural clustering in the

Netherlands illustrated the ambivalent mixture of cultural, economic, social and spatial interests and sediments in forming cultural policy and stressed the need to develop a more sophisticated understanding of the locally specific appreciation of the changing interests between culture (place) and commerce (market) in today's mixed economy of leisure, culture and creativity.

Commercialization is viewed as a double-edge sword when it enters both cultural and sport events. The case of Olympic Games is illustrative with the extensive commercialization and the transformation of the event in a multi-billion dollar business, which apparently comes in antithesis with the ideals of the Olympic Movement (Allison, 2006; Barney, 1993; Giatsis, Ziakas, Zygouri, & Giatsi, 2004). The polemics against or in favor of commercialization has often political and ideological basis. For example, Greece in its two bidding efforts to host the Olympic Games in 1996 and 2004 raised a polarized discourse between right and left wing parties over whether or not the multi-billion dollar enterprise of the modern Olympics had a place in the country that conceived the Olympic ideals (Ziakas & Giatsis, 2001). Hill (1990, p. 90) summed up the two completely opposite arguments about commercialization in the Olympic Games:

On the one hand, a purity of intention, which does not readily accommodate itself to the world of commerce. On the other hand, enterprising capitalism which sees the fears and doubts of the purists as merely anachronistic.

Similarly, there is a body of research that decries the commercialization of leisure and culture (Budd, 2001; Lippke, 2001; Walsh & Giulianotti, 2001) because of the resulting negative effects when commercial interests curtail or seek to control celebration (Chalip, 2006). It has been shown that when commercial objectives override event attendees' own celebratory preferences, attendance and support are eventually reduced (Giulianotti, 2005). For example, a study on Venice's carnival illustrates how decreasing



popular participation in the festival was due to an increasing manipulation of carnival through an alliance of political and tourism interests, which resulted to promote carnival as a product to increase a faltering winter tourist trade (Rubenstein, 1990).

The problem, however, is not only caused by uses of commercialization but also by a combination of political, social and economic interests of the elites. As research shows often the economic rationales for hosting events are mere legitimizing rhetoric (Sack & Johnson, 1996; Whitson & Macintosh, 1996) for the agendas of political elites (Chalip, 2006). For example, Stewart's (1986) discussion of carnival in Trinidad is illustrative. As he notes, whereas in the past the festival construed an alternate context with reflexive and rebellious potentials, recently it became an extension of a modernizing process central to the overall objectives of current political leadership. The objectives of the government policy were to cultivate both a national identity and a tourist trade and thus local culture was conceptualized as both industry and commodity within the entertainment field. The carnival eventually was handed over to a carnival development committee and as a result the national festival has evolved into a series of staged, competitive performances for both adults and children (Stewart, 1986).

It seems, therefore, that events often become occasions where the interplay of multiple interests takes place and they provide a space for the constant negotiation of those interests. The extent to which egotistical interests of the elites prevail depends on the structure of social and political arrangements of a host community. Events are from their nature neutral and they are shaped by social forces. Perhaps the only way to secure equality of interests and participation in the planning and implementation of events would be their embeddedness in the social structure of host communities so that all social groups have access to decision making and planning for events.

From the standpoint of social leverage for sport events, Chalip (2006) argues that the issue is not the mere presence of commercial interests, but the ways that commercial interests become represented through event operations and theming. This argument obviously shifts attention from the fact of commercial presence or gain at an event to the end being served. However, the end does not always justify the means. Commercial and political manipulation is often justified on some indisputably virtuous ends. It is conventional wisdom that the higher the stakes the higher the struggle for control of an event. For this reason, the presence of commercialization in events should be questioned in terms of whether someone benefits at the expense of others and whether the nature and character of an event change drastically. This is fundamentally an argument about Pareto optimality that refers to the situation which exists when economic resources and output have been allocated in such a way that no-one can be made better off without sacrificing the well-being of at least one person (Cirillo, 1979). Although transformation of events can be constructive, the uncontrolled penetration of commercial interests may be catastrophically deconstructive. Thus, commercial components in events should be in accordance with the leverage strategy, character and messages of the event.

It is harder for cultural than sport events to accept commercial elements due to ideological and thematic standpoints they represent. This complicates the ways that commercialization can be introduced and managed in an event portfolio. Sport events are spectacles where commercialization can be instituted, managed and leveraged accordingly. As Chalip (2006) suggests the standard for event organizers and host communities to evaluate commercial activities during an event is the degree to which those activities nurture or inhibit liminality (Chalip, 2006). It is not certain, however, if the same is the case with cultural events. There is a gap in the literature for examining

events from this perspective and thus future research should seek to shed light on this area by identifying the conditions and the means by which commercialization can support the social value of events.

### **The Use of Arts**

The third problem concerns how the arts can effectively be incorporated in cultural planning and events for community development. The potential of arts activity as a tool for urban regeneration and community development has recently gained wide acceptance with utilizing major events in city regeneration processes and merging tourism strategies with urban planning for community development (Markusen, Schrock, & Cameron, 2004). For example, a study on determining the local economic impact of the three leading arts festivals in South Africa indicated that the location and size of the town is an important factor in the impact of the event on the town and the region (Saayman & Saayman, 2006).

Garcia (2004) analyzed the cases of three cities (Glasgow 1990 – European City of Culture; Sydney 2000 – Olympic Games and Olympic Arts Festivals, and Barcelona 2004 – Universal Forum for Cultures) illustrating that the contribution of arts programming in urban regeneration has been great in the case of the cities she studied but it has not yet realized its full potential. She identified as current limitations in this process the lack of coordination among event organizers, tourism bodies, city planners and the arts community which exists because of a tradition of unexplored synergies between popular event activities including sports competitions and crowd entertainment and the implementation of arts activities.

Garcia (2004) concluded that despite the wide acceptance that the arts can be useful tools for city renewal, in the context of hallmark investments, they tend to be

present in a tokenistic manner, as a mechanism to attract media attention and external visitors rather than as a vehicle for local representation and empowerment. This obviously limits the potential that the arts could have in regeneration strategies and possibly linked with other special events.

From an economic standpoint the use of the arts in events and festivals can contribute to tourism development. At the same moment, however, the social value of the arts can be vital. For example, Quinn (2006) conceptualized arts festivals as socially sustaining devices and argues that while they frequently function as tourist attractions, their social significance extends far beyond tourism. Using empirical material gathered in two case study arts festivals in Ireland, Quinn (2006) demonstrates how such festivals can contribute to arts development by inter alia creating demand for the arts, enhancing venue infrastructures, encouraging local creativity and animating local involvement. Quinn (2006) demonstrates how the interfering economic and tourism priorities of the festivals caused problems with respect to the quality of the relationship forged between the festivals and local populations in the respective places. It appears, therefore, that the use of the arts in events, tourism and revitalization of host communities needs to be carefully managed in the interests of promoting the socially sustaining function of events while encouraging sustainable approaches to regional development.

Another interesting example reported in the literature is about a festival (Erie Summer Festival of the Arts in Pennsylvania), which used an oral history/folklore program to attract underserved segments of the public, encourage broad-based participation, and built a higher profile within the larger community (Walle, 2003). This example shows how mainstream cultural festivals can be strategically broadened through the inclusion of vernacular artistic expression. Obviously, event organizers and host

communities need to think innovative ways to build diverse attendance through the use of the arts. Research could identify the means by which the arts can be inclusive and not turn potential audiences away because of perceived “seriousness.”

### **Towards Effective Cultural Planning**

Stevenson (2004) examined the anthropological definition of culture that has become hegemonic within cultural planning in relation with the political objectives and parameters that constrain its implementation. To redress the ineffective cultural planning, she supported that the limits of the anthropological definition of culture as it is being mobilized within cultural planning must be addressed and there must be considered ways of engaging overtly with other understandings of culture as product and process.

However, this re-conceptualization requires that cultural forms of consumption can actively enhance and enliven local communities by giving meaning to people and not merely representing a means to economic ends. In response to this enquiry, Bailey, Miles, and Stark (2004) sought for different connections to other drivers of regeneration in the social and economic fields and they provided an alternative paradigm of culture-led urban regeneration connected with the revitalization of identities examining the case of Newcastle, Gateshead in the North East of England. In this respect, Bailey et al. (2004) concluded that a combination of a people’s or a region’s identification with place and space, and pride in and of that place and space as well as its heritage may potentially represent what is a powerful cultural force that can, in itself, affect regionally place specific change in cultural attitudes against, or accelerated beyond, national and international as well as socioeconomic norms.

Bayliss (2004) presented the case of creative planning in Ireland and the role of culture-led development in planning, illustrating the successful mobilization of heritage

in search of tourism, the recent incorporation of culture into strategic planning and development initiatives, and the links between culture and development that have positioned Ireland in a strong position to avail itself of the positive social and economic impacts of planning for culture and creativity.

Another illustrative example of effective planning was demonstrated by Hughes (1999) who studying the Hogmanay festival in Edinburgh notes that it played a role in the ways that city officials and local residents re-imagined their community and neighborhoods, thus having a perceptible impact on the ways that they conceive, design, and use their social and physical environment. Similarly, it has been shown that the carnival in Bolivia became an ongoing source of social imagination and innovation because it serves as a means for comparison with everyday life (Goldstein, 1997).

Cultural festivals and events are increasingly becoming arenas of discourse enabling people to express their views on wider cultural, social and political issues (e.g., Cohen, 1998; Cruikshank, 1997; Holland & Skinner, 1995; Lewis, 2000; Manning, 1981; Rasnake, 1986; Regis, 1999). Recently, Crespi-Vallbona and Richards (2007) in examining the discourse on cultural festivals from the perspective of stakeholders involved in traditional and popular culture events in Catalunya, Spain note that often the debates polarize into those advocating change and those wishing to preserve “traditional” or “local” culture in the face of modernization and globalization. The authors demonstrate that there is generally a high level of agreement about the aims of cultural events and the cultural content that is appropriate for them. In particular, the importance of cultural events in underpinning Catalan identity is seen as being important. However, the authors found that stakeholders tend to differ more in the meanings attached to concepts such as identity, with policymakers exhibiting a greater emphasis on economic

and political issues, whereas cultural producers are more concerned with social aspects of identity.

As this example illustrates the general consensus on the social role of cultural events among the different stakeholders is a foundation for the development of festival culture and effective policy use for host communities' regeneration strategies. On this basis, festivals, therefore, can be effective tools for promoting desirable growth and change (Chacko & Schaffer, 1993). Host communities seek to enhance the livability quotient for their constituencies by encouraging local enterprise, serving the needs of residents, and promoting sustainable development (Derrett, 2003). However, the employment of strategies to utilize cultural events may be fundamentally different according to the spatial characteristics of host communities.

In particular, rural areas face different problems from urban areas and cultural planning has to be versatile in the particular needs of host communities. Janiskee and Drews (1998) in discussing the role of festivals in revitalization and tourism of rural communities in the United States note that destinations incorporate festival production into long-term plans for visitor industry development. However, they observed that few rural festivals are part of any conscious effort to reposition tourist destinations for targeted markets. Rather, they simply highlight local attractions and reinforce the prevailing image of rural communities as attractive environments in which to live, work, and play. They are capitalizing on the special affection that Americans have for small towns and pastoral landscapes (Janiskee & Drews, 1998).

For small rural communities, all the events should be based on the community's existing cultural and physical resources. In this regard, Janiskee and Drews (1998) underscore that a rural festival's programmed attractions tend to celebrate the host

community's rural lifestyle and distribution of predominant economic activities. The interesting phenomenon is that while the underlying message of rural festivals may be fairly simple, Janiskee and Drews observe that the temporal, geographic, and thematic patterns of festival production are quite complex: Time placement, title themes, programmed activities or attractions vary from place to place and region to region in accordance with the distribution of economic activities, cultural traits, historically important events, climate, topographic features, and other variables (Janiskee & Drews, 1998).

In this diversity of rural festival production from region to region there are two apparent patterns, which are interlinked. The one is the rediscovery or reinvention of history and its presentation through events and festivals to attract tourism. Cameron (1987) noted the value of tradition, which is marketed through events. This has led to the phenomenon of heritage tourism. The second theme is that many rural communities choose to host recurring festivals throughout the year in order to attract visitors. This is connected to the proliferation of events in communities that capitalize on their history to become destinations.

It is quite common that every host community capitalizes to some extent in its history and cultural resources to promote itself and entice visitation. However, as event and festival production shows, history can be invented. For example, a study on the Elvis Revival Festival in the small town of Parkes in rural Australia explores the way in which a remote place with few economic prospects has created a tourism product, and subsequently captured national publicity, through a festival based around commemoration of the birthday of Elvis Presley, a performer who had never visited Australia, and certainly not Parkes (Brennan-Horley et al., 2007). The Festival began in



the early 1990s, when a keen Elvis fan rallied promoters (and other fans) around the idea of bringing Elvis impersonators to the town for an annual celebration. Since then, the Festival has grown in size, with notable economic impact. The town now partly capitalizes on its association with Elvis, constituting an “invented” tradition and place identity. Yet, the authors identify the tensions that such a festival may create. For example, the images of Elvis and the traditions generated by the festival challenge those who wish to promote the host community through more austere, staid notions of place and identity. In other words, for some, Elvis is a means for the town to generate income and national notoriety, while others prefer less “kitsch” tourism attractions such as a nearby (and nationally famous) radio telescope (Brennan-Horley et al., 2007).

Another issue is the authenticity of events. For some events it may be debatable the extent to which they portray the authentic heritage or context of a host community. In addition, visitors may have a stereotypical view of heritage and expect a common pool of heritage activities and attractions in events. For example, a study exploring visitors’ perceptions of authenticity regarding a folkloric festival in Grand Rapids, Ohio found that although visitors expressed strong interest in heritage festival, their perceptions of authenticity of the heritage resources was superficial (Xie, 2003). Another study examined historical event re-enactments in the context of the Lewis and Clark expedition to the U.S. Pacific coast and back again from a heritage tourism perspective and found that perceptions of nostalgia and authenticity define the re-enactment products (Ray et al., 2006). A danger lies here. The commercial logic of staging events and festivals in rural communities to serve the needs of visitors may thus conflict with the context of a community and may portray non-authentic elements of its heritage. The extent to which this will have negative impact is uncertain but it is clear that authenticity

should be taken into account by host communities and event organizers as research on tourism suggests (e.g., Cohen, 1988; McCannell, 1973; Silver, 1993; Wang, 1999).

Obviously, the cultural policy in search of traditions and/or association with alien histories through the event and festival production bears implications for the identification of local people with the historic cultural elements that are promoted in events. The importance of preserving local culture in rural tourism (Petrzelka, Krannich, Brehm, & Koons-Trentelman, 2005) by affirming or reconstructing the local sense of place and identity is documented in tourism research. The derivative social value the festivals may bring to host communities can be magnified through the representation of history in events. For example, De Bres and Davis (2001) in examining the event of Rollin' Down the River Festival, held in rural communities along the Kansas River found that the role of festivals in challenging the perception of local identity can be very important and, in the case of small festivals, is often the most important outcome along with the tourism visitation. On the grounds of the proclaimed civic pride and local identity as well as tourism benefits, rural host communities opt to capitalize on events and festivals in a recurring basis.

Janiskee and Drews (1998) note that a recurring festival serves to help establish and advertise the specific themes that a community selects for the recreational packaging of its heritage resources. In particular, a heritage festival's title and scheduled activities usually reflect a particular historical era and the lifestyles or significant events and people associated with it. The festival, therefore, provides an effective way to highlight a specific historical concept or event, create an aura of personal contact with the historic past, and draws attention to community heritage assets whose existence and worth might otherwise escape notice (Janiskee & Drews, 1998).

In other words, festival production can be a versatile highly effective means of publishing a rural community's appealing features and attracting tourists who might otherwise never visit. As Janiskee and Drews (1998) note, the beneficial effects of festivals extend well beyond generating tourism dollars and include strengthening the social capital of rural communities (Arcodia & Whitford, 2006), and enriching the quality of small town life. The main value of festivals lie that they provide entertainment that dramatically increases a community's visitor appeal. They can generate event-based tourism by simply hosting differently-themed festivals at appropriate intervals throughout the year (Janiskee & Drews, 1998). This advocates for the value of an event portfolio for small rural communities. However, here lies a root cause that needs to be managed by host communities and event managers if it is to manage effectively a series of events. The proliferation of festivals may lead to exhaustion of local resources or participation and attendance. Rural festivals are supported mainly by local people and their saturation point can be revealed to the extent to which there is participation and attendance of local people. Another problem concerns the loss of novelty, which can be lost due to the recurring organization of events and fierce competition with other rural communities, which imitate and host similar events. In this case the interest of visitors for destinations may wane.

In general, as Bayliss (2004) noted in a region's vitality and success of culture-led development factor a plethora of parameters with the most important being the cultural production as well as consumption, public involvement and animation, and a holistic approach to cultural planning encompassing other policy areas such as tourism, transport and infrastructure plus commercial, retail and residential development. This approach requires that event planning be a topic in the local policy community where all

stakeholders participate and have a voice of expressing their ideas, concerns and interests. In this context thus, synergies between cultural, sport, business, tourism and other bodies should be established in order to achieve co-ordination in the pre- during- and post-event periods. This can increase awareness of events in community as well as improve event facilities and infrastructure for leisure, sport and tourism. In order to shed light on the multifaceted dimensions that event planning for tourism and regional development necessitates pertinent literature from these fields is reviewed in the following section.

### **SPORT TOURISM AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

The planning of policies that will embrace sport and special events as a means to generate social capital can be grounded on the notion of events as focal leisure practices. In this sense, events of a portfolio can be the avenues for generating shared meaning and collective action within a community. Yet, the implementation of such a policy cannot be viewed in isolation without considering the economic policy. It requires a conceptual framework, strategic objectives, participatory planning, and the development of inter-organizational relationships. This is of course critical for the incorporation of sport and special events into the local policy agenda for regional development.

Since the development of policies is always influenced by a number of interests and arrangements, the ways sport and event managers could influence such policies needs to be examined in the sport and event management research. Towards this end, urban regime theory may be employed to explain the nature of arrangements and social order of a host community that influences and sets up policies. Also, the idea of sustainability needs to be applied in the context of events in order to demonstrate how it could be integrated with general economic and social development. The spatial dimensions of

events and sport tourism need to be better understood so that host communities can be informed on how to capitalize on opportunities and adapt generic tools to their contextual particularities. Similarly, the networks of inter-organizational collaboration need to be examined in order to identify the patterns of associations that enhance cooperation and social capital strengthening the capacity of a host community to organize an event portfolio. Each of the above is discussed below.

Urban regime theory refers to the public officials and private interests that function together as allies in the region's governing coalition and the nature of the policy agenda pursued by this coalition. Because business people occupy a special position in urban regimes, they are considered "privileged voices," and policy decisions are often a result of informal arrangements that favor their factional interests. Consequently, inequality stems from the nature of the agenda pursued by the local governing alliance that has regressive distributional effects (Ambrosio, 1997).

From a planning perspective, Fitzgerald and Leigh (2002) contend that local economic development should embrace the notions of social equity and sustainability in the policy agenda and seek to include all community groups and organizations in decision-making in order to achieve fair redistribution of wealth and environmental sustainability. This perspective is grounded on Campell's (1996) development conflict triangle that stresses the need to balance the conflicting interests of economic growth and efficiency with social justice and income equality as well as with environmental protection.

Hinch and Higham (2004) in their effort to provide a framework for the sustainable development of sport tourism suggested that it requires the consideration of existing trends and innovative management strategies of influencing policymaking. For

example, the challenges associated with commodification, and finding a balance between progress and tradition, need to be systematically explored. Where sport and tourism managers collaborate effectively in addressing these issues, sustainable outcomes are more likely to emerge (Hinch & Higham, 2004).

To understand the application of sustainability principles in sport and tourism, it must be considered that sport is a fundamentally spatial activity (Bale, 2003). Yet, as Tonts and Atherley (2005) support, the geography of sport has received scant attention from a rural social and economic perspective despite the important role that sport plays in the structure of rural communities and regions contributing to community identity and providing opportunities for social interaction. Unintended consequences from the processes of restructuring should be taken into account because they have the potential to fragment or degrade the associational social networks (Tonts & Atherley, 2005). More attention to the spatial dimensions of sport has been given recently with the emergence of sport tourism that has been conceptualized as a spatial and temporal phenomenon. In this context, the potential of sport activity to contribute to rural revitalization has just started being explored in the sport management literature.

For example, a study by Costa and Chalip (2005) demonstrated how a rural community in Portugal was unable to capitalize adequately on sport tourism. The reason was the absence of strategic market planning, which contributed to the community's failure to generate tourism revenue from accompanying markets, and to capture a larger spending from sport tourists. Costa and Chalip (2005) suggested that local policy should move towards participatory planning in order to integrate and leverage a rural community's assets and optimize the role that sport plays in revitalization. Of course, this requires the identification of the ways that sport tourism can be incorporated into the

social and political structures of host destinations in order to contribute to the sustainable development of the region.

From this standpoint, Hinch and Higham (2004) suggested that the foundations of sport tourism development lie in the geographical principles of space, place and environment. However, the application of sustainable principles to sport tourism presents the challenge of adopting a multi-disciplinary approach that integrates the knowledge of diverse disciplines and derives theoretical and practical implications for the sustainable development of sport tourism. For this reason, Hinch and Higham (2004) suggested that insights can be undertaken from the fields of sport management, sociology of sport, consumer behavior, sport marketing, economic, urban and sport geography and tourism studies in discussing the manifestations of sport tourism development in space and time. This multi-disciplinary approach to sport tourism should be finally followed by a co-operation among the policy bodies and managers to apply research results in the industry.

For example, policymakers need to understand how the symbiotic relationship of sport and tourism can be developed on a sustainable basis in order to maximize the benefits and minimize the damages of sport tourism activities in the community. Planning policies, hence, should seek to integrate sport tourism in the regional and economic development endeavors of a community synthesizing a common framework of environmental, social and cultural policies.

On this basis, Briassoulis (1995) explained that the principal purpose of public sector policies should be to coordinate the economic activities occurring within a given territory so that their demands for environmental services are met within the limits of local environmental carrying capacity. In this sense, she argued that coordination requires integrated planning at the local and regional level. This holistic approach is necessary

since tourism cannot develop profitably and successfully when it competes with other non-tourism sectors for environmental services and suffers negative impacts in the form of limited quantities of quality inputs (i.e., natural resources). In addition, the impacts tourism causes on non-tourism sectors must be also properly controlled (Ziakas, 2000). In short, integrated local and regional planning should provide the following:

- The broad framework for controlling the externalities arising among sectors, treating tourism as a complex activity;
- The infrastructure needed in common by all sectors (Briassoulis, 1995).

The spatial particularities have been examined in tourism literature, which treats rural tourism as a distinct phenomenon. Roberts and Hall (2001) suggest that it is necessary for tourism to be appropriately embedded in the particular set of linkages and relationships, which make up the components of rurality and contribute to rural development. In this context, sustainable rural development as a holistic discipline must embrace tourism and recreation. Yet, this is one component of the policy mix for development while tourism and recreation in turn must complement the multiplicity of other components' uses, needs and demands in order for it to be regarded as appropriate and potential contributor to sustainability (Roberts & Hall, 2001).

The discourse, thus on sustainability and tourism development has driven tourism scholars to support an integrated and holistic approach in which tourism can be founded. This approach places at its core the sustainability idea. This notion requires that the continuing improved social, cultural and economic well-being of human communities be an integral component of tourism policies. Roberts and Hall (2001) suggest that rural tourism must be integrated with community-based development initiatives and not



planned as a single sector. Their perspective views as critical to the success of both businesses and communities the questions of how tourism and recreation's development may be integrated into wider rural development planning. Although there are not unproblematic answers for such a question, embedding rural tourism necessitates collaboration, networks, and the development of partnerships.

Tourism research, however, has recently sought to move beyond the commonsensical need for stressing the value of embeddedness and cooperation for tourism development. A clarion call for re-conceptualizing tourism and sustainability has been made in tourism literature. In particular, the argument has been that in order to facilitate a more effective transition to sustainability, tourism researchers need to turn their attention to transformations occurring in related fields, to integrate knowledge relating to complex adaptive systems (a necessary retreat from reductionism), extensive integration of human and natural systems, and new interpretations of sustainability (Farrell & Twining-Ward, 2004). This perspective can be also useful to sport and event management. Re-conceptualizing sport and events in relation with the natural and social systems in which they operate could yield sustainable outcomes for host communities. This could be a fruitful area for research in the sport and event management fields.

Therefore, the study of event portfolios should take into account the above discourse on sustainable development. Above all, however, if event portfolios are to be integrated as policy tools into the sustainable development of a host community, a multi-disciplinary approach should seek to embrace the pertinent realms of theoretical knowledge and encourage the social, professional and political groups for its application. Such a synthesis does not seek to become a distinct body of knowledge but rather to operate "between" as a means of achieving sport tourism and community development.

In terms of implementation, notions of collaboration, coordination and partnership can be nurtured within the emerging network paradigm. Networks refer to the development of linkages between actors where linkages become more formalized towards maintaining mutual interests. The nature of such linkages exists on a continuum ranging from loose linkages to coalitions and more lasting structural arrangements and relationships (Roberts & Hall, 2001). The ways that networks can enable collaboration and shape or embed an event portfolio in the institutional structure of a host community and the associated policy dimensions for sport tourism, sustainable economic or social development merit attention. Thus, social network theory as it pertains to inter-organizational relationships is discussed in the following section concluding the literature review.

#### **SOCIAL NETWORK THEORY AND INTER-ORGANIZATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS**

Networks are a distinct, hybrid mode of coordinating activities among organizations involving a range from highly informal relationships to contractual relationships. Network development has received much attention in both academic and government communities. Networking has been a hallmark of innovation and refers to a wide range of cooperative endeavors between otherwise competing organizations linked through economic and social relationships (Roberts & Hall, 2001).

The central tenet of social network theory is that actors are embedded in networks of interconnected social relationships that offer opportunities for and constraints on behavior (Granovetter, 1985; Laumann & Pappi, 1976). Network research embraces a distinctive perspective that focuses on relations among actors, whether they are individuals, work units, or organizations (Brass, Galaskiewicz, Greve, & Tsai, 2004).

Originated from sociology, network research links micro and macro levels of sociological theory (Granovetter, 1973). The application of this perspective in organizational studies differs from traditional perspectives that examine individual actors in isolation. The difference is the focus on relations rather than attributes, on structured patterns of interaction rather than isolated individual actors (Brass et al., 2004). Social network research employs a distinct methodology known as network analysis (Freeman, White, & Romney, 1989; Knoke & Kuklinski, 1982; Scott, 2000), which is applicable to any type of network relationships (e.g., interpersonal, inter-organizational, formal, informal, etc.).

The objective of social network analysis is to understand the pattern and content of the interactions that take place within and among social units. Social network analysis defines networks as sets of ties linking several individuals (Nelson, 1989). Granovetter's (1973) research on the strength of dyadic weak ties was seminal in network theory and guided network research to examine the impact of this principle on diffusion of influence and information, mobility opportunity, and community organization. He argued that the degree of overlap of two individuals' friendship networks varies directly with the strength of their tie to one another. The emphasis on weak ties lends itself to discussion of relations between groups and to analysis of segments of social structure not easily defined in terms of primary groups (Granovetter, 1973).

For sociological and organizational research, network theory has sought to understand the network forms of organization and their implications for social or organizational action respectively. Podolny and Page (1998) define the network form of organization as any collection of actors that pursue repeated, enduring exchange relations with one another and, at the same time, lack a legitimate organizational authority to arbitrate and resolve disputes that may arise during the exchange. Network forms of

organization in the workplace can foster learning, represent a mechanism for the attainment of status or legitimacy, provide a variety of economic benefits, facilitate the management of resource dependencies, and provide considerable autonomy for employees (Podolny & Page, 1998). Powell (1990) argued that a norm of reciprocity is a guiding principle underlying network forms of organization with each member of the network feeling a sense of obligation to the other party or parties rather than a desire to take advantage of any trust that may have been established. Trustworthy behavior and normative standards are expected constituting a moral autonomy of a networked group of organizations (Granovetter, 1995).

Organizational studies recently focused their attention on explicating inter-organizational relationships by employing social network analysis. There is an emerging body of research examining the nature and formation of inter-organizational networks such as alliances, partnerships, health delivery and policy systems (e.g., Human & Provan, 1997; Krauss, Mueller, & Luke, 2004; Provan & Milward, 1995; Taylor & Doerfel, 2005). Within this context, the establishment of trust and moral obligation is identified as a critical component in the development of business inter-organizational networks (Perrow, 1993; Uzzi, 1997; Podolny & Page, 1998). The emphasis on trust and mutuality underscores the function of exchange networks as a means to generate and foster social capital.

An important concept in examining inter-organizational networks is structural holes (or overall system networking). Burt (1992) defined the structural hole as a gap between two actors or two clusters of actors (A and B) that can be spanned by another actor (C) who may, thereby, become the only member to belong to both A and B (if these are clusters), or who serves as the only intermediary between A and B (Burt, 1992). This

measure calculates the extent to which system members have efficient and effective network connections (Freeman et al., 1989). A balanced system is one in which the links among its members are not too redundant but also the links in the system connect its members so that communication flows throughout it. The number of structural holes can be expected to increase with network size but the holes are the key to information benefits (Burt, 1992).

Inter-organizational networks can be separated in two broad categories: those that are institutionalized and have a formal structure, hierarchy and objectives (i.e., alliances) and those that are non-institutionalized and operate with an invisible structure and not specific objectives. The abstract nature of these informal networks (Cross & Parker, 2004) is often hard to be understood even for those organizations, which are part of the network. Cross and Parker (2004) note the hidden power of such social networks, which can maintain and enhance social capital. In other words, an informal network is a group of organizations that are integral to a core process and establish informal relationships with other members of that group in order to achieve their individual goals. This understanding of informal networks is particularly important for policymaking, sport, tourism, and strategic event planning. Each of these domains operates in an invisible and complex network of actors that engage in different types of relationships in order to provide their services. Whereas for individual organizations the involvement in the network may vary due to the nature of their work, the entirety of a policy, sport, tourism, and event planning as well as delivery services is the result of the actors' interaction in the system that each offers a part for the whole process to be completed.

An event portfolio is at the intersection of all the above domains and it consequently implicates a complex system of organizations that already have

relationships to some extent. However, given the fragmented nature of sport, tourism and events and their lower status in policymaking often there is isolation of some organizations and lack of ties between organizations. The conceptualization of the networks that these domains operate could not only explain the invisible structure, hierarchy of relationships and generalized norms of reciprocity and collaboration but also it could demonstrate what organizations need to establish ties and from what pathways. In other words, an event network approach could explain, evaluate and improve the capacity of a host community for inter-organizational collaboration in order to achieve a core process of a domain.

Inter-organizational network research is a recent but rapidly growing body of knowledge that can inform such an inquiry in utilizing event portfolios for community and sport tourism development. In particular, inter-organizational network scholars focusing on micro-macro links in network formation and change contend that individual actors shape the formation and development of social structures through teleological and serendipitous processes. An event network is of course a serendipitous system. Kilduff and Tsai (2003) explain that network change in such systems is driven primarily by serendipity, and network trajectories develop haphazardly from the interactions of individual actors. A network that follows a serendipitous development path has no pre-existing goal around which members cluster. The organizing principle is not goal consensus but dyadic matching in an evolutionary process of random variation, selection and retention. From these multiple dyadic encounters, some connections are made based on homophily of attributes or interests, and some of these connections endure. There are no network-level goals to drive the process of interaction. At any point in time, any specific pair of actors may or may not share goals (Kilduff & Tsai, 2003).

An event network is characterized by individual interests, which make the process of establishing ties arduous. As Kilduff and Tsai (2003) explain in serendipitous network processes, individual actors make choices about who to connect with, what to transact, and so on, without guidance from any central network agent concerning goals or strategy and form ties or partnerships based on their own interests. Consequently, such networks have decentralized structure with no single leader and the growth is based on dyadic ties that are built on interpersonal trust. Collaboration is achieved on the basis of trust that is developed in dyadic relationships and provides channels through which information and other resources flow. As it happens in everyday life, dyadic relationships of power are formed and the respective actors exert influence in the system. In this respect, social network theory in the context of an event network can explain the web of associations among actors and who exercises power in the local decision-making processes as well as relationships and what those with power aim to accomplish.

In the field of tourism the importance of networks has already been addressed by research (Dredge, 2006). Buhalis and Cooper (1998) highlight that network relationships are of great significance for tourism promotion and coordination. Coordination does not mean any formal intervention, but identifying and working towards common objectives by tourism enterprises and by their support bodies in the public and private sectors. Networking allows tourism enterprises to pool their resources in order to increase their competitiveness, draw up strategic management and marketing plans, reduce operating costs and increase their knowledge (Buhalis & Cooper, 1998).

Also, a study on tourism policy network in Australia demonstrates the usefulness of the policy network approach to describe, analyze, and explain the dynamics of the tourism policy domain with its vast variety of actors and complex web of interactions

(Pforr, 2006). The study focused on stakeholders in the policymaking process, their relationships (reputation, cooperation, and communication), and the structural context in which these take place. These parameters are used to map the intensity and density of relational constellations and to assess how stakeholders take each other into account in their actions (Pforr, 2006).

The sport industry provided a context for a few scholars from organization studies to apply network analysis. The first seminal study was by Sterns (1979) that employed network concepts to examine the transformation of NCAA from a loose voluntary confederation of universities into the dominant agent over intercollegiate athletics. The author argued that the structural network analysis must be accompanied with the consideration of network process. Thus, he examined the historical transformation of the network of organizations participating in intercollegiate athletics by focusing on four determinants of network structure (i.e., administration, coupling, multiplexity, and new resources) and the processes that link structure to organizational interests. This examination of process and history revealed contradictions within the network, resistance to change by political interest groups, and the interactions among network structures.

Recently, another study was by Wolfe, Meenaghan, and O'Sullivan (2002) who applied social network theory to the sports industry illustrating the concepts of power, dependency and relationship building. They showed that the development of relationships instills commitment to a complex network, which should ensure that sports bodies, sponsors, and media are better positioned for strategic development. A central question that arises from this research is how a sport and/or event network could be managed in order to generate social capital.



In the sport management field researchers just started to think through the conceptual lens of network analysis. An example is a recent study in Australia by Dickson, Arnold, and Chalip (2005) regarding the Victorian Football League's expansion into Brisbane that examined the inter-organizational power between an independent federated network and those organizations seeking to join the federation. They demonstrated that organizations within the federation have a power advantage over the potential affiliates and the extent of this advantage is directly proportional to the importance of the potential affiliate's goals, is mediated by resources controlled by the federation, and is inversely proportional to the availability of other federations to supply the potential affiliate with the same resources (Dickson et al., 2005). The study demonstrated issues of interdependence, uncertainty, and exchange that factor on power and determine the extension of inter-organizational networks. In this regard, theoretical approaches of inter-organizational cooperation (Smith, Carroll, & Ashford, 1995) and inter-organizational trust (Zaheer, McEvily, & Perrone, 1998) are useful in explaining the development of relationships. Moreover, the resource-based approach (Barney, 2001) is pertinent because it can explain the competitive advantage that potential affiliates possess in order to be accepted into the network.

Recent studies in event management also start shifting attention toward network relationships. A study examined how and why inter-organizational relationships of public sector events' development agencies impact upon event tourism strategy-making in Australia (Stokes, 2007). Furthermore, Getz, Andersson, and Larson (2007) drawing on resource dependency and stakeholder theories, presented a conceptual model illustrating that festivals and events are produced within and by a set of managed stakeholder relationships. Clearly, research should start exploring sport networks (i.e., inter-

organizational business networks and public-private policy networks) in terms of sport policy or strategic event planning. The sport and event management fields need to build knowledge in this area if it is to provide a conceptual framework for effective, integrated and embedded sport delivery and event systems. A social network approach could help us conceptualize the complexity of interaction in sport contexts and to describe the relationships amongst actors. More specifically in the context of an event portfolio, a network approach could be utilized to theorize the cause and effects of the range of interrelationships amongst the range of event stakeholders and local community.

#### **CONCLUDING REMARKS**

The review of the literature on seemingly disparate lines of inquiry as they relate to event portfolio planning for community development and sport tourism shows that the theoretical foundations of studying strategic event planning can be built upon an integrative framework. Although an event portfolio is a non-institutionalized and abstract concept in the innate fragmentation of events, it has the potential if managed appropriately to be a mechanism for bringing together event organizers, policymakers and other stakeholders. This does not imply that event portfolios should be institutionalized and add one more bureaucratic office to host communities' departments. This approach rather seeks to identify the means by which the existing departments in host communities and event organizers can adopt a holistic perspective in terms of event assortment and their links with other spheres of life, social structures and policies for development.

In envisaging an event portfolio, events can be categorized in genres: festival, ritual, game and spectacle. Also, it would be useful to classify event types in terms of the

performance that they entail: cultural (i.e., parades, carnivals, historic re-enactments, etc.), sports, arts, and mixed. In turn, events can be classified according to the purposes they serve: tourism, celebration, recreation and education. This classification is not exhaustive since events can be invented for every new purpose, performance or genre. They rather represent the main facets and roles of events across all the genres, which demonstrate the potential to be integrated and used to achieve intended outcomes.

To understand and study events in unison, three perspectives from the literature are pertinent: social dramaturgy deriving from anthropological work on events and interpreting events as symbolic rituals and social dramas; managerial determinism that characterizes sport and event management research supporting deterministic uses of events such as tourism, commercialization, and social or political purposes; and communitarianism deriving from philosophical grounds, which has been adopted in the field of community development decrying commercialization and individualism. The parallel that may actually help us organize an event portfolio is social capital. The integration of these perspectives informs and builds knowledge on the ways that events can be utilized to create, maintain and enhance social capital.

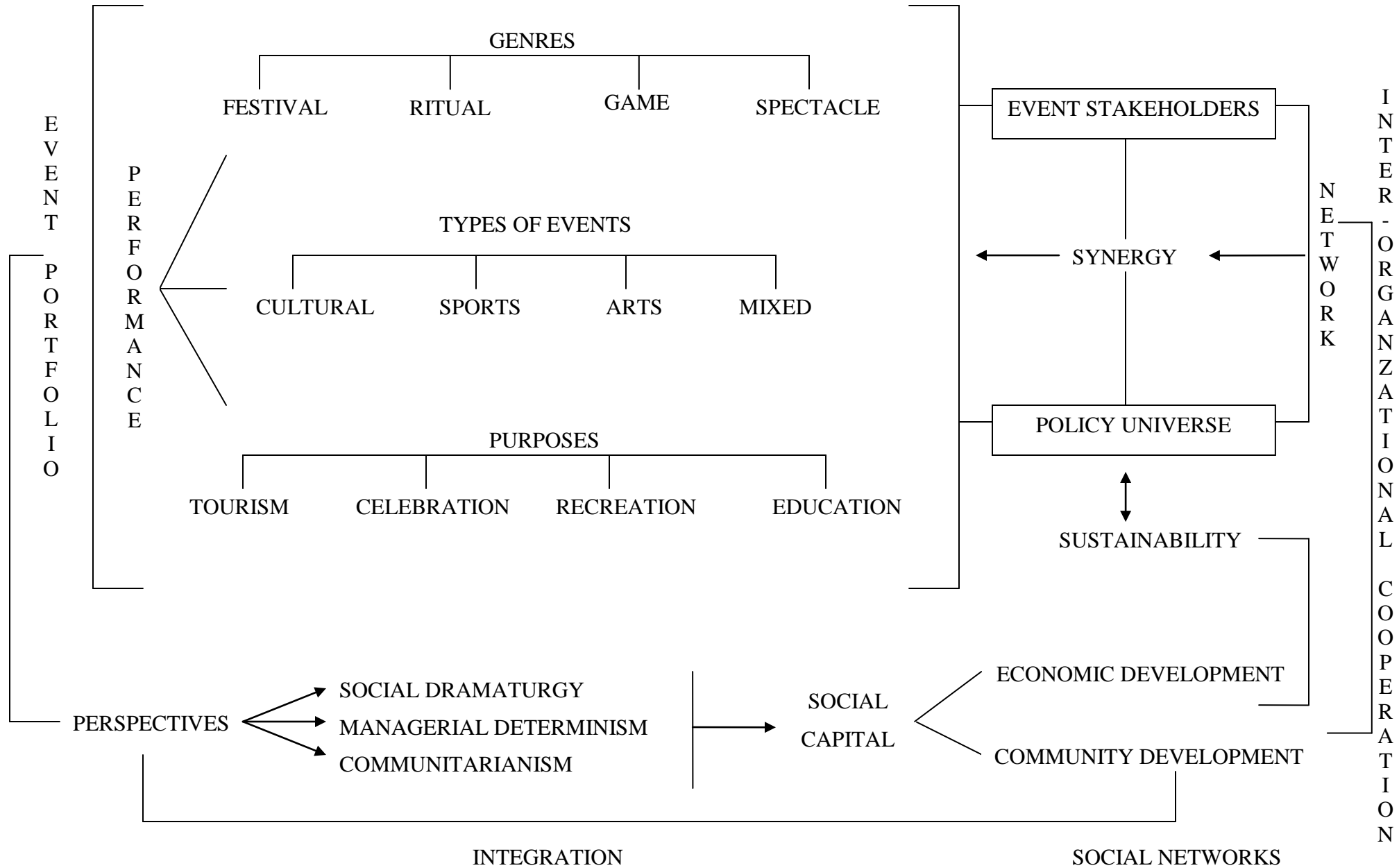
The notion of social capital connects social and economic purposes of events on the basis that an investment in social relations may derive expected returns in the market place (Bourdieu, 1985; Coleman, 1990; Putnam, 2001). Thus, the strengthening of social fabric through events can yield both social and economic benefits. From this perspective, the objectives for tourism or social development can be part of the same scope that is represented by an event strategy. Social networks that support the hosting of events can interact and connect in this context. Collaboration can be promoted to stir collective action and support the network of formal organizations that host events. Inter-

organizational cooperation between event stakeholders and the policy universe can be achieved by setting a common policy for hosting the event portfolio. Sustainability is the key variable in such a policy balancing the economic and social outcomes of events.

The conceptual framework, which is illustrated in Figure 2.1, derives from the literature review. It is a theoretical construct and seeks to be useful in terms of helping understand the possibility for synergy and integration that an event portfolio holds. From this standpoint, it could guide future studies in the area of event portfolio planning and regional development. However, this framework does not represent an attempt to prescribe a prototypical process that such integration in the realm of event portfolio planning can be achieved. On the contrary, it is intended to serve as a starting point. As the literature review shows there are many problems that inhibit an integrated approach to strategic event planning. Research should seek to clarify the questions that arise from those problems and then employ pertinent methodologies to answer those questions. This study moves towards this direction, which is entirely unexplored.

To conclude, the logic for event portfolio implementations is to utilize the different themes of events for economic, social, sport and tourism development. In other words, the incorporation of different events into a portfolio requires an integrated mindset in viewing community, economic, sport and tourism development in unison. This can facilitate leveraging efforts of events for each of the above purposes but at the same time should seek to foster the parallels between them. In essence, the primary strategic opportunity that an event portfolio offers is that it lays a foundation where a common approach may be taken among different policy communities and stakeholders by working together to leverage all the different events that are included in a host community's portfolio.

**Figure 2.1: An Integrative Framework towards Event Portfolio Planning**



### Chapter 3: Method

*There are no facts; only interpretations.*

*Friedrich Nietzsche.*

*Doing ethnography is like trying to read a manuscript -foreign, faded, full of ellipses, incoherencies, suspicious emendations, and tendentious commentaries, but written not in conventionalized graphs of sound but in transient examples of shaped behavior. (Geertz, 1973, p.10)*

Given the lack of empirical study on event portfolios, the methodological approach for the examination of the research questions was essentially exploratory. Ethnographic methods were employed to understand how actors construct reality and interact within the context of the event portfolio. In particular, I strove to probe into the “culture of a host community” and illustrate how it perceives sport and cultural events, the meanings and roles that the events carry for the community and the ways that this community is striving to utilize the events as a means for economic and social development.

Ethnography enables the researcher to delve into how people in a culture construct meaning and perceive reality. Considering that multiple realities are individually constructed and interpreted, ethnography seeks to untangle and understand them by providing a depth of information that permits detailed exploration of particular issues and a continuing dialogue between theory and emerging data. The subjectivity of the researcher is implicated in the interpretation of the reality and therefore the task is not to describe the truth but to reveal the multiple truths apparent in others’ lives (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995). Similarly, Geertz (1973, p.453) wrote about thick description in ethnography:

*The culture of people is an ensemble of texts, themselves ensembles, which the anthropologist strains to read over the shoulders of those to whom they properly belong. There are enormous difficulties in such an enterprise, methodological pitfalls to make a Freudian quake, and some more perplexities as well. Nor is it the only way that symbolic forms can be sociologically handled. Functionalism lives, and so does psychologism. But to regard such forms as “saying something of something,” and saying it to somebody, is at least to open up the possibility of an analysis which attends to their substance rather than to reductive formulas professing to account for them.*

From this perspective, I never sought to “discover the truth” hidden under the phenomena into investigation or to derive an irrefutably epistemological account of event portfolios. Rather I sought to provide explanations by delving into the multiplicity of intertwined meanings, contexts, purposes and visions that events represent. On this basis, research questions were the guide that led me to new questions and an even wider array of possible explanations. In order to delimit and delineate these explanations, going back to literature was a necessary task during my interaction with the data and the interpretation of conditions that events help to create or maintain. In this regard, the methodological aim was to provide an erudite account that describes events and conceptualizes the event portfolio as a phenomenon of social and economic significance in the life of a host community that merits policy attention. For this reason, the objective was to erect the foundation by generating a theoretical framework that will ground future research in this neglected area and inform practitioners.

In this chapter the research design of the study is firstly explained. The methods employed include ethnographic fieldwork and social network analysis. The ethnographic method entailed participant observation and in-depth semi-structured interviews. Social network analysis involved the quantitative examination of the inter-organizational relationships of the entities hosting events. For both methods data collection and analysis

are explained. The problems of the methods employed are discussed, and finally the limitations of the methodology are stressed.

## **RESEARCH DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION**

The rural community of Fort Stockton, Texas was chosen as a case study. The main reason that this community was selected as an appropriate field of study was that despite its innate disadvantages (i.e., being a remote small community in the desert of South-West Texas) it hosts an extensive portfolio of events that contribute, as local people purport, to the economic and social development of the area. Ethnographic fieldwork was the primary method for data collection. In addition, an inter-organizational network analysis survey was conducted. The research design of both methods as well as data collection and analysis are explained separately in this section.

### **Ethnographic Fieldwork: Research Design, Data Collection and Analysis**

Fieldwork was conducted during 2005 and 2006. I first went to Fort Stockton for one month during the summer of 2005. While in Austin I followed Fort Stockton's life by reading the weekly newspaper in order to be aware of any major changes or events that happened in the community. I then moved to Fort Stockton in the beginning of the summer of 2006 and stayed there until November of the same year. After leaving Fort Stockton, and for the period of six months, I continued to be in touch with the community by being in contact with two key informants from Fort Stockton and reading the local newspaper.

The sampling of events was purposive. The most important events from an economic, sport tourism and community development perspective were studied including the prominent sport and cultural events. The methods of data collection included



participant observation, and informal as well as semi-structured in-depth interviews. Data were collected from multiple sources to increase the reliability and validity of the method. Primary data from participant observation on event preparation and implementation was kept in a research journal throughout the overall data collection process. In particular, the research journal contained observations and fieldnotes from the meetings of event organizing committees and implementation of events.

Secondary data were collected including marketing collateral, private and public sector reports on events' organization, media releases and articles from newspapers as well as archival material. The collected documents included: (1) the budget reports for 2005-06 of the City of Fort Stockton, Pecos County, and Independent School District; (2) six booklets of the Chamber, Economic Development office, School District, Library, and the two local museums; (3) one strategic planning document from the Library for 2005-2007; (4) one report of the Chamber in 2006 compiling community data (5) a document entitled Pecos County Narrative Profile; (5) two leaflets from the Lifestyle Coalition and Rural Community Development program; (6) four programs of the Rotary Club; (7) thirteen news articles of the local newspaper; (8) one doctoral dissertation on Fort Stockton's history; (9) one pamphlet with Fort Stockton's official calendar of events; (10) eight programs of Harvest Fest, Water Carnival, Pioneer Days, BBORR, RRORR, Motorcycle Road Runner Rally, Labor Day Weekend Fiesta, and 16 De Septiembre Fiesta; (11) one planning document and the operating budget of Water Carnival. In addition, census data were taken from the website of US Bureau of Census and any pertinent information regarding Fort Stockton and its event portfolio were taken from the community's official website.

Given the exploratory nature of this research, a set of particular study questions was developed building upon the more generic research questions that guided the fieldwork in order to probe into the essence of the phenomena under study and to prevent serendipitous factors from distracting my focus during fieldwork. These questions were more of a rhetorical nature and thus answers were not sought but rather they stimulated my thinking process and ability to grasp into the meaning of events. They also served as a guide for the production and writing of the ethnographic text.

For example, some of these questions were the following: (1) What are the contextual particularities of Fort Stockton as a rural destination that influence the organization of sport and cultural events? (2) Does Fort Stockton create or enhance social capital through events? How do the opposing conceptions of leisure as shared meaning and leisure as consumption manifest in Fort Stockton's events? (3) What are the major roles of events in the life of the community? What is the value and meaning of sport events in the case of Fort Stockton? What is the value and meaning of other genres? (4) What are the continuities and analogies between different events? Where do Fort Stockton's events fit in Handelman's typology? How can the common elements of different events be incorporated into the host community's overall mix of products/services and utilized in marketing communications to promote the host destination's desired image?

Since an ethnographic study is a process of continuous exploration and interpretation as well as negotiation with new findings that do not fit exactly in the initial study inquiries, I did not close my eyes to the new research questions that emerged. I treated them as both rhetorical and as avenues to conceptualize the events as phenomena that give meaning to local people. These questions informed at a great extent my analysis

and shaped the presentation and structure of the ethnographic text. In essence, they afforded possibilities of uncovering the complex and multiple layers of social reality in Fort Stockton. They eventually made me think of the pertinence of Foucault's (1972) metaphor of "archaeology of knowledge" in ethnography. As one discovers ideas, one uncovers precursors to them in the shifting and deeper layers and strata of an archaeological site.

For example, some of the new research questions that emerged during fieldwork were the following: (1) Do events in Fort Stockton help to develop thin or thick trust in relationships among people, groups and social networks in the community? (2) Are events in Fort Stockton geared towards social purposes compatible with cultural consumption patterns (culture as product and process) and what is the impact of commercialization? (3) What are the variables that can be managed in implementing successfully an event portfolio? (4) What are the strategies, event characteristics and major decisions involved in designing an event portfolio? (5) What is the story that events in the portfolio convey and metaphorically narrate?

From the beginning of the fieldwork and in all my interactions while in Fort Stockton, I intentionally explained the purpose of my research and engaged in informal conversations with event participants, organizers, and volunteers. In many cases, these conversations with local people were a kind of unstructured "interviews." The main objective of such conversations was to increase my understanding of complex behavior and dynamics without imposing any prior framework of official interviews that might limit responses. However, I also conducted 18 semi-structured in-depth interviews with event organizers, volunteers, and local officials in order to delve into major issues identified. In order to avoid being obtrusive I did not tape record the interviews; instead I

took extensive notes during each interview and I systematized the responses after the end of an interview by typing them clearly in a document under the corresponding questions. In some cases, I followed up the interview with face to face or phone interactions in order to complete missing parts or understand unclear ideas.

Throughout my fieldwork I sought immersion in others' worlds and local culture in order to grasp what they experience as important and meaningful. With immersion the researcher sees from the inside how people lead their lives, how they carry out their daily activities, what they find meaningful and how they do so (Goffman, 1989; Emerson et al., 1995). In particular, Goffman (1989) insisted that field research involves "subjecting yourself, your own body and your own personality, and your own social situation, to the set of contingencies that play upon a set of individuals, so that you can physically and ecologically penetrate their circle of response to their social situation, or their work situation, or their ethnic situation" (p. 125). Therefore, in ethnographic research, immersion involves both being with other people to see how they respond to events as they happen and experiencing for oneself these events and the circumstances that give rise to them (Emerson et al., 1995).

This requires a re-socialization of the researcher into the new culture under study and the learning of new skills. Sharing everyday life with a group of people, the researcher will come to enter into the matrix of meanings of the researched, to participate in their system of organized activities, and to feel subject to their code of moral regulation (Wax, 1980). By participating as fully and humanly as possible in another way of life, the researcher learns what is required to become a member of that world, to experience events and meanings in ways that approximate members' experiences (Emerson et al., 1995).

However, here lies the oxymoron of ethnographic research that while immersion is sought at the same moment, the researcher has to keep himself/herself in a distance and critically interpret the phenomena under study as an outsider. The ethnographer must develop a perspective that mediates his or her cultural background and that of the newfound cultural mates (Sands, 2002). In this regard, I positioned myself as a researcher who was eager to learn about the community and help anyway I could. While I tried to be part of the community I never became a “social chameleon” adapting my manners and playing roles in order to fit in. I was myself, a foreign graduate student who was seeking to build communication bridges with the culture of rural West Texas and in these terms immersed within it so that I could understand the actualities of local life as they pertain to special events.

The sample of unofficial ethnographic interviews ( $N=74$ ) consisted of event participants, event organizers, volunteers and business stakeholders. I sought to talk with representative people belonging to these groups. Based on convenience and availability of respondents, I interviewed event participants ( $N=15$ ) and event organizers ( $N=12$ ) to find out their perceptions about the events. Similarly, I interviewed volunteers ( $N=13$ ) and when I had the opportunity I talked with event attendants from local community ( $N=10$ ) and/or neighboring communities ( $N=7$ ). Finally, I talked with business stakeholders including owners of hotels ( $N=4$ ), restaurants ( $N=6$ ), grocery stores ( $N=5$ ) and gas stations ( $N=2$ ). The objective of interviewing all these groups of people was to examine whether the perceptions of event roles, organization and outcomes were the same or disparate among the aforementioned groups of people.

The sample of semi-structured interviews consisted of event organizers ( $N=7$ ), volunteers ( $N=6$ ), and local officials ( $N=5$ ) who were involved in the organization of

events. The selection of interviewees was made on the basis of the particular events that I examined and the respective public officials who were supporting these events. Four scripts were developed to serve as framework of the semi-structured interviews and as the guide of the informal conversations with event organizers, volunteers, participants and business stakeholders (Appendix A).

In ethnographic data analysis, the positionality of the researcher should be addressed and reflexivity be sought in data analysis (Foley, 2002). This is because the researcher's assumptions, interests and theoretical commitments enter into every phase of writing an ethnography, and influence decisions that range from selecting which events to write about to those that entail emphasizing one member's perspective on an event over those of others (Emerson et al., 1995). The process is thus one of reflexive and dialectical interplay between theory and data whereby theory enters in at every point, shaping not only analysis but also how social events come to be perceived and written up as data in the first place. Subsequently, in the data analysis, data and established theory from the literature were not dichotomized as two separate entities but theory was viewed as inherent in the notion of data in the first place.

Although a constant comparative method was applied to inductively generate themes that grew out of activities occurring in the setting under study (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) the intention was not to discover a hidden theory of one indisputable truth but rather by addressing my own biases as a researcher I strove to put the pieces of a puzzle together. From this standpoint, the theory emerges from observation and interpretation of event-related phenomena standing in the cross-roads of locality, literature and subjectivity. The dialectical interplay between them develops, compares, and contrasts the emerging themes and findings.

A standard protocol for qualitative data analysis was employed (Spradley, 1980; Weiss, 1994). Specifically, the interview responses, fieldnotes, and documents were reviewed in order to identify themes relating to the nature, organization and scope of event portfolio in the development of Fort Stockton. Content analysis was applied to scrutinize primary and secondary data. The coding of thematic contents was implemented in the following two phases:

First, in open coding all the data were examined in order to identify and formulate the main ideas, themes, or issues. Fieldnotes were coded first and then were cross-examined with the responses from interviewees. This helped to compare whether my understanding, as reported in the fieldnotes, agreed with the respondents' perceptions. Also, the answers of interviewees, as I reported them in a written document, were examined thoroughly along with the secondary data. Some of the secondary data such as documents (i.e., event and historical reports) were particularly useful for delineating the characteristics of the themes that were emerging. Data that were not relevant to these emerging themes were coded and sorted into different categories, hence suggesting other themes or categories to be explored such as event production, event sport tourism and event dramaturgy. This kind of continuous coding and categorizing the data assisted in comprehending and substantiating the themes that emerged.

Eventually, four inductive categories were identified. These were the following: (1) event roles, (2) event relatedness, (3) inter-organizational cooperation, and (4) event portfolio planning/implementation. These thematic categories constituted the framework of the subsequent content analysis. Table 3.1 reports the basic coding structure of content analysis as it was further developed after the identification of sub-themes in the second phase.

**Table 3.1: Basic Coding Structure**

THEMATIC CATEGORIES	EVENT ROLES	EVENT RELATEDNESS	INTER-ORGANIZATIONAL CO-OPERATION	EVENT PORTFOLIO PLANNING
SUB-THEMES	<u>Community Issues:</u> Community Apathy; Education; Higher Paying Jobs; Beautification; Life Quality; Ethnic Relations	<u>Connectivity:</u> Continuity; Common Elements; Selection of Safe Themes	<u>Actors:</u> Recreation Dept. School District County City Council Extension Office CVB Historic Fort Annie Riggs Economic DC Mediators Chamber Hispanic Chamber Library Athletic Dept.	<u>Factors:</u> Contingency Market Demand Local Resources Competition
	<u>Policy Purposes/Event Objectives:</u> Tourism; Destination Image; Community Development; Event Types; One-time Events	<u>Experiential Capacity:</u> Replication; Water Carnival Influence & Membership; Staging of New Events	<u>Factors:</u> Institutional Structures; Embeddedness; Formalized Volunteerism; Event Integrity; Inter-connectedness	<u>Event Characteristics:</u> Formality Coherent Image Intentionality Polysemy Ancillary Events In-between Event
	<u>Event Outcomes:</u> Unintended; Economic; Social	<u>Markets:</u> Hispanics; Neighboring Communities; Families; Schools; Car Racers; Motorcycle Riders; Sheep-Dog Handlers	<u>Constraints:</u> Collaboration Friction; Social Inertia	<u>Operational Decisions:</u> Number of Events Event Fit Frequency Placement Event Uses
	<u>Symbolic Meanings (of):</u> Water Carnival; Sport Events; Harvest Fest; Pioneer Days; Open Road Races	<u>Volunteer Pools:</u> Different events appeal to volunteers with different interest; Rotation of the same volunteers	<u>Event Network Characteristics:</u> Inter-organizational Reciprocity; Density; Centrality; Multiplexity; Attitudes toward Collaboration; Event network Embeddedness	<u>Inferential Multi-layered Parameters</u> Functionalism Scope; Dialectical Expressivity; Symbiotic Polymorphism; Resource Inter-Changeability
	<u>Social Relations Patterns:</u> Collectivism; Participatory Inter-connectedness	<u>Lack of Relationship:</u> CVB event calendar does not include the Recreation & Athletic Depts.' sport events; No Cross-leverage		

Second, in focused coding data were subjected to fine-grained, line-by-line analysis on the basis of the above four thematic categories topics that had been identified



as of particular interest (Emerson et al., 1995). Thus, I went through examining the data four times, each time highlighting those parts that discussed one of the themes. In this process I identified and coded sub-themes according to the frequency of occurrence for each of the thematic categories. In particular, five sub-themes were identified in the event roles category: community issues, policy purposes/event objectives, event outcomes, symbolic meanings (of events), and social relations patterns. The sub-themes of the event relatedness category appeared to be the following: connectivity, experiential capacity, markets, volunteer pools, and lack of relationship. There were four sub-themes for inter-organizational cooperation: actors, factors, constraints, and event network characteristics. Finally, the sub-themes of event portfolio planning/implementation were the following: factors, event characteristics, operational decisions, and inferential multi-layered parameters.

In order to redress my own subjectivity as a researcher, I presented and discussed my observations with four key informants. This aimed to engage local people in the production of ethnographic text and interpretation of results. This process opens a dialogue between the researcher and local people and democratizes the production of ethnographic study (Coffey, 1999; Foley, 2002). The researcher gives some of his power as an expert who “holds the truth” and becomes a part of the data analysis while local people become co-producers of the study.

My own observations and comments from key informants were then presented to a detached researcher to cross-validate the generalizability of the findings. On this basis, the inductive thematic categories and their sub-themes that emerged from the above analysis constituted the basis of a theoretically informed analysis. This in turn shaped the structure of the dissertation and grounded the inferences about Fort Stockton’s event

portfolio. On this ground, the data were further examined and assembled in new ways in order to explain how they were related to each other and identify relationships that fit the themes into a normative frame of generic relationships. After identifying such patterns in the data, I followed Eisenhardt's (1989) suggestion and returned to enfolding literature for triangulation and conceptual clarification of those patterns. Four central phenomena emerged from the data and appeared to be logically explained. These were event portfolio planning, social utilization of event portfolios, in-between event dramaturgy and event portfolio design.

Then, I wrote theoretical memos noting how the above themes and concepts explain the above phenomena and relate to the literature, hence developing the theoretical implications. Thus, the generation of the final theoretical frameworks is guided by data than limited by it following a realist approach or adaptive theory (Layder, 1993, 1998) and expands their implications in concert with the literature. The conceptual frameworks were elaborated through the construction of plausible models and justified in terms of explanatory coherence by constructing diagrams, which consisted of a central phenomenon, causal factors, aims/objectives, strategies, multi-layered conditions (or stages) and outcomes. However, the eventual conceptual frameworks do not represent a superlative epitome of Fort Stockton but rather they seek to explain the phenomena by drawing inferences to the best explanation (Haig, 1995). In this regard, the theoretical frameworks are ever-developing entities, and not perfected products, generated and appraised by an abductive process of a realist and explanatory inferentialism (Haig, 1995) that focuses on understanding common causes and patterns by making inference to the best explanation (Lipton, 2001).

The reasoning process of abduction that was employed (Peirce, 1955, 1960) is a critical process of drawing conclusions that includes preferring one hypothesis over others, which can explain the facts, when there is no basis in previous knowledge that could justify this preference or any testing done (Peirce, 1955). Historically, Aristotle's use of the term *apagoge* has referred to a syllogism in which the major premise is known to be true, but the minor premise is only probable. Abductive reasoning starts from a set of accepted facts and infers to their most likely, or best, explanations to ground the exegesis (i.e., critical interpretation) of phenomena under scrutiny.

Abductive reasoning was essentially employed because the study is exploratory and field-dependent in the sense that the questions it posed did not arise from an established theory, but from the phenomena that revealed themselves during the research process. The fieldwork dictated the questions, the population, the terminology (in part), the timetable and the possible instruments of research. Given the absence of any previous studies and scant knowledge on the event portfolio phenomenon, the generation of knowledge suggesting explanations has as a criterion that the inferences stand according to the laws of logic. Also, the study dealt with both abstract phenomena and immediate facts, which needed explanations organized into a sensible structure and an adaptive conceptual or theoretical framework (Turner, 1986). Overall, the generated theoretical models can be described as “hypotheses on probation” unless they are confirmed by future studies.

Finally, it must be noted that the third person was chosen as the voice for the ethnographic text. The exception is the methodology description where I used the first person. The reason for this distinction is to emphasize that the research design and decisions pertinent to methods and analysis were my own and reflect my subjectivity.

However, the writing of the manuscript, the presentation and analysis of findings as well as the development of theoretical frameworks inflict a comprehensive integration of the partial with the whole that requires the detached position of the researcher from the phenomena under examination. This way the researcher may be able to reflect on the findings in concert with academic literature and neuralgic aspects of subjectivity that influence their interpretation. Therefore, as I distanced myself from the events that I observed and studied during fieldwork in order to interpret them, in a similar fashion I wrote and presented them from a neutral, third person perspective.

### **Network Analysis: Research Design, Data Collection and Analysis**

Since an event portfolio involves a plethora of actors intertwined within a complex network of associations, the sociometric method of social network analysis was employed (Burt & Minor, 1983; Freeman et al., 1989; Knoke & Kuklinski, 1982; Scott, 2000), as a means of quantifying patterns of relationships and enriching the findings of ethnographic observation.

Social network analysis is an orientation towards the social world that inheres in a particular set of methods. It is not a specific body of formal or substantive social theory (Scott, 2000). The social network approach offers the possibility of helping us understand how individual actors create, maintain, exploit and are constrained by social structures at several levels of analysis such as the inter-organizational linkages (Kilduff & Tsai, 2003) and the ways in which networks of relationships are embedded within social structures (Granovetter, 1985; Laumann & Pappi, 1976).

According to Kilduff and Tsai (2003), network research has several distinctive features that differentiate it from traditional approaches in the social sciences: (1) Network research focuses on relations and the patterns of relations rather than attributes

of actors, (2) network research is amenable to multiple levels of analysis and can thus provide micro-macro linkages, (3) network research can integrate quantitative, qualitative and graphical data, allowing more thorough and in-depth analysis.

The central inquiry of network analysis in this study was to explicate the inter-organizational linkages that bolster the capacity of a community to host an event portfolio. In this respect, the network analysis sought to clarify the nature of an informal inter-organizational network by exploring the role key entities involved in the organization of events play in shaping them and by examining how the network affects actors' choices on hosting events. It also sought to identify attitudes toward collaboration and what are the benefits or drawbacks that actors in the network perceive to have from their existing inter-organizational relationships in hosting events.

In other words, the network analysis can illustrate the web of relationships among organizers of sport and cultural events, and the supporting organizations. It can evaluate a community's capacity to capitalize on an event portfolio through inter-organizational cooperation. For the purposes of this analysis an informal special event network is defined as the non-institutionalized array of organizations that take decisions and actions about how to plan and implement events in a given community and tend to engage in relationships that facilitate their goals. The extent to which collaboration patterns are characterized by reciprocity and trust among those organizations, it is hypothesized that synergies between sport and cultural events can be developed and enhanced within the context of an event portfolio in order to maximize the benefits derived from them for the host community.

In general, a major line of inquiry in social network analysis is to understand the flow of tangible and intangible resources (such as information) through identifying the

different types of links among organizations and where communication is absent or should be enhanced. Also, it is important to understand what organizations are dominant in a network and whether any alliances are formed within it. Potentially the web of relationships may suggest an organization that is able to play the role of coordinator in a given network.

In a special event network it is not hard to understand that collaboration is an important component of planning and implementing sport and special events. For this reason the relationships among the agencies within the network should be evaluated to help describe the process of implementing coordinated strategies. A well-connected event network could improve a host community's policies and strategies through more efficient and effective use of knowledge and resources.

As Bourdieu (1985) supported social networks are not a natural given and must be developed through investment strategies that seek to institutionalize group relationships in order to be used as a reliable source of other benefits. In this regard, from an instrumental resource perspective, although an event network is not institutionalized, it can be a mechanism for guiding where (i.e., to what individual organizations or interest groups) investment strategies for events should be directed. Above all, however, from a collective resource perspective (Coleman, 1990; Putnam, 2001) an event network can be a source for creating and enhancing the social capital of a host community by encouraging reciprocity and collaboration toward the whole scope of hosting and leveraging an event portfolio. Therefore, it seems that a special event network can function as a mechanism wherein an integrated approach can be adopted encompassing the uses of events for economic and community development.

The number of organizations for the Fort Stockton special event network consisted of formal event organizing entities that seemed to have inter-organizational relationships among each other and/or were involved significantly in the event portfolio. An initial understanding of the structure was based on the ethnographic observation and interviews in order to identify the organizations that comprise the event network. On the basis of the community's institutional framework, senders and receivers of links were specified and cross-analyzed along with evidence of inter-organizational relationships.

The network analysis includes organizations that are autonomous or are administered by the City Council, County Council, or the Independent School District. Therefore, the organizations were the following: Chamber of Commerce, Tourism Department, Recreation Department, Athletic Department, Extension Office, Hispanic Chamber, Library and the community's two museums. Voluntary groups such as the Rotary or Lions Clubs were not included in the network instrument because they do not host any major events. Similarly, the Economic Development Corporation was not included because it does not have any task to allocate resources to events.

The network analysis addressed three particular research issues:

1. Whether collaboration within the event network is consistent across all types of links that were measured.
2. What organizations might be more heavily involved in the network than others.
3. Whether attitudes toward collaboration are altered (enhanced or diminished) on the basis of cooperative interaction within the event network, trust, benefits and drawbacks.

The specific objectives of using this type of analysis were the following:

1. Examine relationships among organizations involved in planning and implementing sport and cultural events based on their communication, exchange of resources, and assistance.
2. Identify the most important actors within the event network and describe how they relate to other actors.
3. Investigate the structure of the event network in terms of mutuality in relationships and evaluate the community's capacity to capitalize on the event portfolio via an inter-organizational collaborative event network.

An instrument (see Appendix B) was adapted from Provan, Nakama, Veazie, Teufel-Shone, and Huddleston (2003) to fit the context of a special event network and research questions. The instrument was distributed to event network entities. The Directors in each organization were asked to fill it out in order to ensure that their views represent the official attitude and policy of their organizations. The instrument was explained to the respondents and they were given a period of one week to fill it out. Then the researcher collected the instruments from each organization and when needed clarified any missing answers.

The first question in the instrument was the extent to which the responding organizations view their involvement in special events as critical or important for accomplishing their respective overall mission. This was to make sure that all organizations included in the survey were significantly involved with special events as part of their mission. The second question made up the major part of the network survey and concerned the types of links (i.e., associations) the organizations have as they collaborate to host events. Four types of links were identified on the basis of inter-organizational relationships literature (Krauss et al., 2004; Provan et al., 2003; Provan &



Milward, 1995) and critical reflection on the evident collaboration exchanges between event organizing entities, hence determining the major forms of collaboration that take place among agencies in hosting events. The types of links included shared information, shared resources, help sent and help received. These types of links were listed in the instrument and respondents were asked to indicate whether they had these types of links with the other agencies. In addition, the respondents were asked to rate the relationship quality with agencies. These were linked on a scale from 1 (poor) to 4 (excellent). The intention was to examine the levels of trust in relationships that already involve collaboration experience. Based on organization theory literature trust does not follow the establishment of linkages and can be tested or even fluctuate in existing relationships, which have implications for network stability (Gulati, 1995; Uzzi, 1997).

The respondents could also list any other organizations that they were working with in organizing events that were not included in the survey. Furthermore, the instrument included three questions asking the respondents to identify five critical individuals, agencies and civic groups respectively in the organization of events. The purpose of this question was to identify critical actors within the special event network. The last question in the instrument was adopted from Lasker, Weiss, and Miller (2001). Nine benefits and five drawbacks were listed, and the respondents were asked to indicate using a checkmark whether each had “already occurred”, “expect to occur” or “do not expect to occur”, from their cooperation with other agencies in organizing special events. This question sought to evaluate attitudes toward collaboration within the event network on the basis of their hitherto experience.

Specialized statistical software for social network analysis UCINET (Borgatti, Everett, & Freeman, 2002) was used to analyze the data. Data were entered on UCINET

forming four matrices, which were the following: (1) shared information, (2) shared resources, (3) help sent, (4) help received. Matrices were formed as follows: an agency received a score of 1 where there was a link with another agency and it received a score of 0 where there was no link. In order to examine whether responses between organizations were the same for reporting a link and hence increase the reliability of the findings the process of link confirmation was applied. Four new matrices were formed for the respective links. In these matrices an agency received a score of 1 only when the link was confirmed by the other agency and it received a score of 0 when the link was not confirmed. Also, the mean confirmed links were measured as the total number of confirmed links of a particular type maintained by the average agency. Since there were nine organizations in the network ( $N=9$ ), the maximum number of confirmed links for each matrix representing a type of link was seventy two (72) (that is nine organizations multiplied by eight maximum confirmed links for each organization). To calculate the mean number of confirmed links the total number of reported confirmed links was divided by nine. The maximum mean number for confirmed links was eight.

Moreover, a new matrix was formed for “any links”. For this matrix an agency received a score of 1 if it had any of the aforementioned linkage types (confirmed only) with another agency. This intended to identify the minimum level of connectivity in the network. On this basis, the “any links” matrix was used to produce a sociogram depicting the relational positions of agencies in the event network. The mean confirmed links were measured also for this matrix.

For the matrices with unconfirmed types of links cohesion in terms of reciprocity was measured. Cohesion measures the extent to which a network is comprised by organizations, which are mutually linked. It is a symmetric measure in contrast with

density, which is asymmetric because the latter does not account for reciprocity/mutuality. It is calculated by dividing the existing mutual ties between organizations by the maximum of possible mutual ties in the network (Freeman et al., 1989; Knoke & Kuklinski, 1982). The values range from 0 (low cohesion meaning a network with no mutual links) to 1 (high cohesion meaning a network with many mutual links between organizations). Group reciprocity and node reciprocity for each type of link and for each organization were also measured.

Density measures the extent to which a network is comprised by organizations, which are linked and communicate with each other. It is calculated by dividing the existing ties by all the possible ties in the network (Freeman et al., 1989; Scott, 2000). The values range from 0 (low density meaning disconnected network) to 1 (high density meaning very connected network). For all the above matrices representing both confirmed and unconfirmed types of links density was measured. Thus, both confirmed and unconfirmed density for every type of link was reported in order to compare the scores, increase reliability and test reciprocity.

The “any link” matrix was used to measure centrality. The minimum level of connectivity for agencies having only one type of link was considered as representative of inter-organizational associations within the network and whether there are multiple types of links was measured through multiplexity. These are two core network concepts that have direct application for studying relationship building within an inter-organizational network.

First, the concept of centrality identifies the extent to which an organization shares connections with others relative to the set of organizations as a whole (Freeman et al., 1989). There are different types of centrality including degree and betweenness

centrality. Degree centrality (or communication impact) is a measure of the extent to which a focal organization has the most communication partners relative to others in the system and explains the extent to which an organization is the “thick of things.” In other words, an organization with high degree centrality receives many links from other organizations. The more an organization collaborates with others, the greater that focal organization’s degree centrality will be (Freeman et al., 1989; Knoke & Kuklinski, 1982; Scott, 2000). Betweenness centrality (or importance) is a measure of the extent to which an organization is central in the system and the extent to which it connects pairs of other organizations. An actor with high betweenness is able to act as a gatekeeper of information in the network (Freeman et al., 1989; Knoke & Kuklinski, 1982).

Second, the concept of multiplexity represents the extent to which a relationship between two actors serves a multiplicity of interests (Barnes, 1979; Kilduff & Tsai, 2003). A high score of multiplexity means that the network is more stable because actors have associations of many types. Thus, if one type of association is lost, relationships between actors may continue through the other types of links. The higher the overall multiplexity score in the network the higher the density of the network. In this respect, multiplexity is an index of individual and overall connectedness to the network.

Multiplexity was measured by forming a new matrix in which an agency was receiving the score of 4, 3, 2, 1, or 0 according to how many types of confirmed links it had with another agency respectively. For example, for two types of links with another organization, an agency was receiving the score of 2, for three types of links the score of 3 and so on. Since there were nine organizations in the network ( $N=9$ ) and four types of links, the maximum number of multiplex links for the whole network was 288, that is for each organization 32 links (8 maximum links for each agency multiplied by 4 types of

links=32) and 32 links multiplied by nine organizations ( $32 \times 9 = 288$ ). To calculate the multiplexity for each organization, the sum of each organization's score was divided by 8, that is the total number of agencies an organization could have relationships with in the network. Because four types of links were measured, the maximum multiplexity score that could be obtained was 4.0 (i.e., 32 that is the sum of each organization's score divided by 8 that is the total number of agencies an organization could have relationships with), indicating that all agencies actually connected to one another through shared information, shared resources, help sent and help received. The mean multiplexity of the network was calculated by dividing the sum of all organizations' measured score by 72 that is the maximum number of relationships in the network that may serve multiple types of links.

Finally, the data network analysis sought to identify whether there are any subgroups in the network. This involved clique detection by identifying a possible number of organizations, which are strongly linked in comparison with the rest in the network. The benefits and drawbacks of collaboration were arithmetically calculated and reported to evaluate attitudes. The answers of respondents for critical individuals, organizations and civic groups in planning and implementing special events were examined along with the ethnographic observations as well as network analysis.

## **RESEARCH CHALLENGES**

### **Self-Reflexivity and Problems with Fieldwork**

The concept of self-reflexivity is integral to an ethnographic study and refers to the researcher's experience in the field. Post-modernism and post-structuralism have put the critique of objectivity and scrutiny of ethnographic authority onto the disciplinary

agenda (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). Proponents of post-modern ethnography insist that self-reflexivity should also become an essential aspect of the ethnography-as-text (i.e., Denzin 1994; Marcus, 1994; Marcus & Cushman, 1982; Richardson 1994; Van Maanen 1995). Such an insistence is also informed by various lines of criticism, which dethrone the authority of the neutral-objective observer, dismiss the scientific genre, point at the rhetorical construction of truth, question the boundaries, which have traditionally been established between the biographical-subjective and the supposedly sociological-objective, and promote the purposeful trespassing of such boundaries (Gottschalk, 1998). These lines of criticism have led to the emergence of reflexivity as an aspect of ethnographic method. Self-reflexivity is often associated with self examination and critique, and the acknowledgment of subjective interpretations and positioning in relation to which the ethnographer provides relevant personal information.

In this regard, I faced the dilemma of whether to follow the third person narrative (keeping myself out of the text) for presenting the ethnographic analysis or situate myself within the realm of events that I observed. Claims to objectivity are now suspect and the responsibility to be self-reflexive about one's ethnographic practices has become essential (Gottschalk, 1998). As Marcus (1994, p. 568) remarked: "one cannot choose to be self-reflexive or not in an essential sense -- it is always part of language use." Therefore, the task for ethnographers is to deal with the fact of reflexivity, be able to judge why they have inserted themselves in a text in a particular manner, and strategize about it for certain theoretical and intellectual interests (Marcus, 1994).

At the same time, the incorporation of self-reflexivity as part of ethnography is a double-edge sword. A number of post-modern ethnographies ended up being nothing more than accounts where individuals discuss family secrets, personal crises, traumas,

desires, experiences, etc., to countless anonymous others for purposes, which are not altogether clear (Van Maanen, 1995). In other cases authors are so desirous to be self-reflexive about subjectivities, private stories and idiosyncratic departures that they effectively evacuate the sociological from their account, and produce texts, which are narcissistic, incomprehensible, or self-indulgent (Gottschalk, 1998; Marcus, 1994).

Self-reflexivity is a means rather than an end, a self-monitoring and “situating” device. It is a tool for reminding writers and readers about the essential situatedness and limitations of what one is about to say (Gottschalk, 1998). To be self-reflexive in ethnographic research means that the reader knows who the ethnographer is, and knows the position from which the ethnographer speaks, writes and observes (Greer, 1990). Self-reflexivity in ethnography can also act as an emancipating practice. By allowing authors to find and develop their own ethnographic voices, self-reflexivity can counteract a certain collective textual alienation promoted by the rules of the “neutral-objective” scientific discourse, which results from the absence of the author in his or her own text, an absence, which encourages distorted relations between author, writing, language, finished product, and audience (Richardson, 1994). In this regard, the liberating possibilities of self-reflexivity allow every ethnographer to develop her/his own self-reflexive research instrument, and find methods whereby can communicate the ethnographic analysis in ways that enable comprehension of, identification and empathy with the phenomena under study, while at the same time, acknowledge and work through the unavoidable presence of subjectivity in the entire ethnographic process.

Considering the above discourse, I decided to incorporate self-reflexivity in the methodology chapter and keep myself out of the ethnographic text. This is mainly because as a novice researcher, I have not been able to develop my own “self-reflexive

instrument” through which to communicate the unavoidable subjectivity into an objective account that enables comprehension of the phenomena under study. Hence, I chose at least to explain the major self-reflexive aspects that influenced and shaped this study in this chapter. These are delineated below.

Being a foreigner it was not always easy to be accepted into the Fort Stockton community’s daily life. In the beginning my outsider status made it challenging to establish rapport with the local people. They treated me as a guest and although I explained my purpose of visit, they did not seem to really understand it. Thus, communication with the local people was more of an instrumental fashion. In this context, my involvement in local life was challenging. I attended mainly public meetings and events and I usually was not allowed to attend closed-door meetings. Probably there was mistrust over me and they perceived me as a threat for exposing the community in risks. This is logical since local people strive to protect their town from exogenous factors and trust takes time to be established. As the time was passing I was being accepted more in the community. Fieldwork thus was a process of continuous negotiation with local people and an endeavor to get accepted and be immersed in the local culture. In this process, the places I mostly met and interacted with people were offices, stores, restaurants, the library, the school and public events, since there are no other leisure facilities in town.

In terms of my influences from my background, I have always had an interest in how sport can be integrated with the arts and other cultural expressions. Being a former athlete from my early childhood in one of the most masculine and controversial sports, I grew up in the agonistic conditions of amateur boxing settings that brought me both joy and disappointment. My free time though has always been dedicated to the arts and I felt



like I had a double life. Since my early years studying Physical Education in Greece, I was wondering how we could really integrate these two different worlds. For this reason, I found the special events as an avenue that this integration could be theorized and implemented.

My personal aspirations for academic achievement and recognition, of course, also motivated my overall effort. Coming from Greece to the States, I experienced first hand feelings of exclusion and alienation. However, my outsider status as a graduate student in Austin helped me to reflect on myself and to embark on new challenges. In this sense, it was with mixed feelings when I started thinking about doing fieldwork in Fort Stockton. I was concerned regarding moving out to West Texas, which seemed to be in contrast with my cultural background and subsequent preconceived notions. However, my academic aspirations, and my inquiring mind to learn how other people think and live, motivated me to visit Fort Stockton and undertake this study. Yet, as I am originally from the rural Makedonia, I eventually realized that the rural life in West Texas is similar to that in Greece, as it is perhaps in other parts of the world.

Another essential aspect of self-reflexivity concerns my academic “bias” in terms of the theoretical framework that conceptually guided the conduct of this study. This was initially based on my aspiring idea to integrate three disparate lines of inquiry with the sport and event management research in order to inductively generate a theory, based on fieldwork observation, about how a host community may host synergistically the whole number of its sport and special events as a policy tool in regional development. The three disparate lines of inquiry are the anthropological interpretation of events, the communitarian perspective and the regional planning approach for sustainable development. This line of thinking initially limited to some extent my sense of

understanding of local people's reality, and in some cases, it was the cause of trying to impose academic thinking on them. It took me some time to realize the serendipitous processes during fieldwork, the uncontrollable actualities and the new events/data that emerge unexpectedly without fitting any conceptual framework. While I probably missed to some degree such findings, I finally realized that I should keep my eyes open to events and data that I did not expect to find and needed new conceptual frameworks in order to explain them. This of course entailed a long and time-consuming thought process to conceptualize and interpret the phenomena. For this reason, I eventually wrote the final autotelic chapter generating new conceptual frameworks with theoretical and practical implications for the study and management of event portfolios.

### **Problems with Network Analysis**

The first problem encountered with network analysis was the difficulty to develop an instrument suitable to measure inter-organizational relationships pertaining to event entities. The lack of any research and application in sport and event management did not provide an example for how such an instrument could be developed. In addition the dearth of knowledge about the nature, structure and even existence or not of special event networks raised concerns whether such a method should be used in this study. However, on the basis of ethnographic findings it was apparent that event organizing entities in Fort Stockton operate as a collaborative inter-organizational network in order to mobilize the necessary integrated set of resources for hosting the event portfolio. On this basis, it was deemed as critical to quantify inter-organizational relationships and hence evaluate the community's capacity to host the event portfolio from an event network perspective.

The instrument was adapted from Provan et al. (2003) to fit the particular context of Fort Stockton's special event network. Because the prototype instrument was designed

for a health care network many of the questions had to be modified with the risk of altering their meaning. Since there is no other study in the area of sport and event management, comparative cross-validation could not be done.

Another major concern was the small number of organizations participating in the event network. Fort Stockton is a small community and the predominant practice in hitherto sport and event management research is to study inter-organizational relationships through qualitative methods (e.g., Thibault, Frisby, & Kikulis, 1999). However, ethnographic observation during fieldwork suggested that the agencies are involved in collaboration patterns that seem to be perceived differently from the organizations involved in multiple relationships. For this reason in order to explicate the inter-organizational linkages toward building the community's capacity to host an event portfolio, the sociometric method of network analysis was employed.

It was not possible to conduct a pilot study for testing the instrument because asking the same respondents to answer versions of the instrument would probably be in excess of their kind support to help. Yet, in order to ensure the appropriateness of the instrument's layout and content, panel discussions with faculty took place and recommendations were made. This resulted in modifying the initial format of the instrument, reducing the number of pages by taking out superfluous parts and rephrasing questions so that they could make sense to respondents. The period of one week that the respondents were given to fill out the instrument was deemed as appropriate. The instrument was picked up in person by meeting the respondents at their organizations in order to thank them and have an opportunity to answer any questions or address any issues they may have had while filling it out. The objective was to get accurate answers.

## **Limitations**

The limitations of the study derive from the particular context of Fort Stockton, which is a remote and small rural community. It is possible that the conclusions drawn and the theoretical frameworks that were developed studying Fort Stockton are not quite applicable to other contexts or need to be adjusted. For this reason, such a kind of study needs to be replicated in other contexts, cultures and urban settings in order to derive indisputably valid results. Similarly, for the network analysis the sample of organizations in Fort Stockton was small and special event networks need to be examined in larger communities in order to yield richer findings.

Considering also the innate subjectivity that is concealed behind personal experiences and aspirations, theoretical biases and commitments, influencing the ethnographic research, it would suffice to say that the study represents to some extent a meticulous but personal version of Fort Stockton's life and events' organization "story." Also, the understanding and interpretation of the data were subject to time and monetary limitations that imposed a particular frame of thinking to implement the study. Thus, this version of "Fort Stockton's event portfolio story" although it is a meticulous academic account, it still stands in the borders of subjectivity and objectivity. From this point of view, the generalizability of the results presented in this study bears innate limitations.

## **CONCLUDING REMARKS**

The methodology used in this study constitutes a suggested conceptual framework for research in utilizing event portfolios for community and economic development. While the methodology neither derived from a particular philosophical theory nor sought

to advocate for a certain philosophical viewpoint, it must be acknowledged that the methodological approach has parallels with post-structuralism.

For post-structuralists there is no methodology that allows the researcher an unmediated, objective representation of reality, whether this reality is a physical object or a social phenomenon (Rorty, 1979). Post-structuralists accept that different representations of reality can mutually co-exist. This assertion goes back to Heraclitus' philosophy about the dynamic unity of reality: "All things come out of the One and the One out of all things. I see nothing but Becoming." In this respect, constant change and negotiation is part of the process that imposes realities in social contexts and emphasizes the multivocal and equivocal nature of the world.

From this perspective, in ethnographic research multiple interpretations of the same phenomenon can co-exist describing and synthesizing the whole. In network analysis such complexity is to be preferred to an insistence that one particular representation of a social network be privileged over another as the true network. A post-structuralist perspective challenges the stability and objectivity of social networks with a reminder of the fragility and subjectivity of network relations (Kilduff & Tsai, 2003). It calls, therefore, for paying more detailed attention to social contexts in which relationships emerge and change than generalizations that derive from the objectivity of academic analysis, which can be merely text-driven. In this respect, Derrida's (1976) famous dictum (there is nothing outside the text) should be kept in mind to consider the extent to which social science in general has become a text-driven endeavor: researchers write, not just in relation to the events and structures in the lives of their subjects, but in relation to other texts (Kilduff & Tsai, 2003).

Ethnographic fieldwork and network analysis for events are also met in the treatment of events and social phenomena as symbolic social texts. From a post-structuralist perspective, society itself can be read and analyzed as a text (Taborsky, 1997). Events are expressive practices that convey or reconstruct meanings and can be studied as texts (Briggs & Bauman, 1992). Similarly, social networks are part of the constantly inscribed and re-inscribed meanings that people create every day as they reaffirm identities. In this ongoing process of identity construction, language takes on a ritualistic, repetitive character (Kilduff & Tsai, 2003). In this context, the scope of academic research in sport and event management needs to examine the multi-faceted aspects that events represent in the social universe from a multi-dimensional perspective scrutinizing the practice of both events and networks as symbolic “social texts” and posing pertinent research questions.

Finally, for post-structuralism the aim of social science is not generalizability as the be-all and end-all of social theory but discovery (Giddens, 1984). In this regard, research does not seek to reveal eternal truths, but to open new questions for exploration. For sport and event management research this is critical because there are neglected phenomena that still wait academic attention. The study of event portfolios is one of them and illustrates a direction toward, rather than seeking to prove every aspect of some paradigmatic set of laws, research should pursue enquiries into previously unexplored domains of sport and event management.

## **Chapter 4: Overview of Fort Stockton and Its Event Portfolio**

This chapter presents an overview of the Fort Stockton's community and economic context. First, demographic and economic data are presented. Then the roles of events in Fort Stockton are examined in order to understand how they relate to public discourse and address community issues. An overview of Fort Stockton's event portfolio is also portrayed with a brief description of its major and indicative events and their contribution to the community.

### **FORT STOCKTON'S COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC CONTEXT**

Fort Stockton is a relatively remote rural community, which is located on I-10 and sits at an elevation of 3,000 feet on the northern edge of the Chihuahuan Desert. It is the seat of Pecos County, one of the largest rural counties in Texas. The town grew up around Comanche Springs, which had long been a rest stop on the Comanche Trail to Chihuahua, Mexico. Later, both the Butterfield Overland Mail route and the San Antonio to Chihuahua freight-wagon road stopped at the springs. The original settlement, known as Saint Gall, was started in the 1840s by Irish, German, and Mexican migrants. The name of the town was changed in 1881 to Fort Stockton in reference to the fort which had been established by the U.S. Army in 1858 on the banks of Comanche Springs. The fort brought security and stability to the area and the town flourished as an agricultural center. Today, in addition to agriculture, Fort Stockton's economy is mainly based on oil production and refinement with RIATA being its major employer. Table 4.1 shows the major employers in Fort Stockton.

**Table 4.1: Major Employers in Fort Stockton, 2006**

<b>Major Employers</b>	<b>Product</b>	<b>Number of Employees</b>
RIATA Energy	Oil Field Service	500
Texas Dept. of Criminal Justice	Prisons	480
Fort Stockton ISD	Education	450
Pecos County Memorial Hospital	Health Care	250
Pecos County	County Services	200

Source: Fort Stockton Chamber of Commerce.

Tourism is another source of support for the local economy. While Fort Stockton is not a destination, it is a passing point for travelers who go to Big Bend national park or to El Paso. At the crossroads of Interstate Highway 10 and U.S. Highways 285, 67, and 385, the town of Fort Stockton is a place to stop, providing travelers with many lodging and dining options, and several attractions such as the Old Fort Cemetery, James Rooney Memorial Park and Pecos County 18-Hole Municipal Golf. The main attractions include two museums, the Historic Fort Stockton Museum, which is a reestablishment of the barracks after being abandoned at the outset of the Civil War. Of the original 35 buildings, only four remain: the Guard House and three of the Officers' Quarters. The second museum, Annie Riggs Memorial Museum, is located in the former hotel owned by Annie Riggs, and displays the local history exploring different aspects of the area's past including geology, archaeology, and pioneer life.

Table 4.2 shows the population in Fort Stockton and Pecos County from 1960 until 2000. The Pecos County region had an estimated population of 16,809 in 2000. The region consists of 4,765 square miles with a population density of 3.53 residents per square mile compared to a statewide density of 79.54 (County Narrative Profile, 2006). Analysis of Table 4.2 shows a small but steady increase in the City's population from 1960 to 1980, and a decrease from 1980 to 2000. The decrease was mainly due to oil crisis. Currently, Fort Stockton's workforce is depleted and the City is looking for ways



to enhance the quality of life and thus attract in-migrant workers. A local official explained:

Four years ago in this community the big pressure was to create jobs. Now our labor force is totally depleted; one of the unexpected things is how quickly we've been successful in creating jobs and now we are facing the labor shortage. The new challenge is how we can correct that and how we can attract people to move into our community.

**Table 4.2: Total Population in Fort Stockton and Pecos County from 1960 to 2000**

Year	City Population	County Population
1960	6,373	11,957
1970	8,283	13,748
1980	8,688	14,618
1990	8,254	14,675
2000	7,846	16,809

Source: US Bureau of Census.

Fort Stockton faced economic depression due to oil crisis in the 80s and 90s, which caused out-of-town migration, thus shrinking the town's population. There are still signs of Fort Stockton's decline in the late 1980s and 1990s. An old business owner described the decline of the town during that period:

[The economy] was solely dependent on oil/gas and in the 80s, there was a crisis, prices got down, companies left town, there were no jobs, people left. But now the town has learned to invest in tourism and other businesses.

Since the economic depression there has been a concerted effort by the town's authorities to revitalize the local economy by investing on business creation and tourism. Yet, Fort Stockton, as many small and remote rural communities, faces the problems of inadequate education and low-skilled human capital. Local people seem to be aware of the difficulties that their town faces. Being away from large cities and having a very dry climate are not the ideal conditions to foster the development of the town. For example, the rainfall in the region averages 13.9 inches per year compared to the Texas average of

30.1 inches per year and the natural amenities of the area reflect an overall surface water of 0.0% compared to 2.5% statewide (County Narrative Profile, 2006).

Poverty is one of the severe problems that the region faces. The per capita personal income for 2002 was \$14,661 in Pecos County while Texas statewide had a per capita income of \$28,553. According to the U.S. census in 2000 there were 3,274 individuals in Pecos County that lived under the poverty level. That figure represents 25.1% of the County's population compared to the Texas percentage of 15.4% (County Narrative Profile, 2006). The existing employment opportunities in Fort Stockton with predominantly low-wage jobs do not help alleviate socio-economic inequalities, and subsequently there are people who are leaving town. A local official explained:

We want our citizens to have the opportunity to make more money. We have a lot of minimum wage jobs and one of the things we want to increase is the wages. We have a lot of convenient stores, lots of restaurants, lots of motels. So we are trying to generate wage increases that will bring in businesses that require more skills.

Table 4.3 shows the ethnic composition of Fort Stockton, which is predominantly of Hispanic origin. Approximately 70% of the total population is Hispanic or Latino and the Whites constitute 27.9% of the population. The vast majority of the Hispanic population is in-migrants of Mexican origin.

**Table 4.3: Hispanic or Latino & White Population Composition in 2000**

Composition	Population	Percent
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	5,482	69.9
Mexican	3,942	50.2
Puerto Rican	12	0.2
Cuban	0	0.0
Other Hispanic or Latino	1,528	19.5
Not Hispanic or Latino	2,364	30.1
White alone	2,192	27.9
<b>Total Population</b>	<b>7,846</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: US Bureau of Census.

Table 4.4 shows the population age composition in Fort Stockton, Pecos County and Texas. Overall, the median age is approximately 33 years old, which by national standards is considered relatively young. This illustrates a potential for economic development since the 20-44 age group, which contains the greatest share of the labor force consists of the 32% of the population in Fort Stockton.

**Table 4.4: Population Age in Fort Stockton and Pecos County in 2000**

Age	Fort Stockton Population	Percent	Pecos County Population	Percent	Statewide
Under 5	635	8.1	1,106	6.6	7.8
5-14	1273	16.2	2,572	15.3	15.8
15-19	730	9.3	1,735	10.3	7.8
20-44	2512	32.0	6,128	36.5	38.5
45-64	1629	20.7	3,447	20.5	20.2
65+	1067	13.7	1,821	10.8	9.9
<b>Median age</b>	32.9		31.20		32.30

Source: US Bureau of Census.

In terms of unemployment, the Texas Workforce Commission shows Fort Stockton's annual rate of 4.8% for 2006 to be lower than the state's rate of 5.7% for the same year. This demonstrates that Fort Stockton's economic development policy has been effective in creating jobs; however, the problem has been that the majority are minimum-wage jobs and there is not a highly-skilled workforce to occupy jobs that require technical skills. This creates uncertainty about the future of Fort Stockton in terms of economic development. The efforts to redress this problem have focused on education and recruitment of out-of-town high skilled employees. A local official pointed out:

We want to increase the level of education for our kids so when they come out of school they are capable of leading the community. We're trying to upgrade the skill level of our residents so that they can take more skilled jobs – the Workforce Commission is working on that.

Another local official explained that the improvement of the quality of life in the area can be used as a tool to attract in-town migration:

Some of the projects that are going on right now are specifically designed as recruiting tools, some of the companies that are here they're going to be spending millions of dollars building entertainment venues as recruiting tools.

In its effort to redress the causes that constrain its prosperity, Fort Stockton started in 2005 a Rural Community Development project in consultation with Texas A&M University. The aim of this project was to bring the community together and collectively identify the major problems and find ways to remedy them. During the process four areas of intervention were identified: (1) community apathy/lack of communication, (2) education, (3) higher paying jobs, and (4) community beautification. Originally some groups had about five or six community members while others had about ten with the expectation that the number of participants would increase as the project evolved. The groups were diverse; there were representatives of the Chamber, business people, and regular citizens. A local official explained:

We have people from all different walks of life and all different economic backgrounds involved in [the Rural Community Development Project]. Basically what we are trying to do with this project is to develop a consensus in our community about what are our biggest priorities. The problem with community development is to get input from everyone, not just the elected officials, not just the staffers, but everybody in the community. The purpose of the community development project is to develop the future vision [of our community] and then act on it and actually help it happen.

In the following year the participation of local people was minimal, which resulted in the discontinuation of the project. This is an indication of the lack of community involvement and civic engagement; however, it may just reflect the lack of free time available. For example, one respondent refuted the call for community

involvement on the basis that family responsibilities constrain the decision of citizens to get involved in community activities:

We need to get back to [planning] simple enriching family activities without being so demanding on people's [free] time. Most are two income families with children. Between work and children's extracurricular activities in school most are burnt out to participate in anything else.

Despite the discontinuation of this project, the efforts of local officials in Fort Stockton continue focusing on the need to create a set of shared community priorities that will place a high value on the ability to mobilize quickly and act on opportunities as well as redress community problems. The effort for collective action has been concerted and orchestrated by the Chamber of Commerce and the Economic Development Corporation. In this leading effort they work together with the rest of community entities. A local official described:

Four years ago the population was really dropping, people were leaving, there were not really a whole lotta prospects for retail development, there was nothing going on. And we then got together with all the Commissions and Boards, we had joint meetings and we went through several things. Most of the things we went through are like today's community development [projects] except what we do now is with the whole community. Four years ago it was the community leaders; we would decide what the problem was, then it was a matter of going to the community as a whole and address it.

It is not certain to what extent the policy decisions were formulated and discussed with common agreement or consideration of the community's competing interests in order for efforts to be responsive to everyone in the community. The formal and informal arrangements may have encouraged a particular definition of the town's problems and may have limited the search processes for solutions to those problems. It seems, however, that there is an intention of local development officials to promote cooperative leadership that stresses participatory decision-making. As a local official pointed out:

In a small community, there are always factions that have personal agendas. But we are trying to set aside personal agendas so that everyone can concentrate on the betterment of the community.

Another local official explained his vision about Fort Stockton:

Of course we would like to see our community grow. I see that we will still be a land based on agriculture and energy. I think we will become a transportation center; the railroad [that the town is trying to reconstruct] will make a big difference on that. I think we will undergo an increase in energy industry over the next several years, and I think we will see some technology coming over here the next couple years.

Community development is viewed by local people as a major issue. A constraint is the lack of a specific shared vision about the town. In some instances residents express frustration by exposing a wide range of issues that need improvement if the town is to grow and prosper. One resident expressed his concerns: “We need more business, more opportunities for the whole family. We also need more activities, more things to do.” Another one noted that: “They [local authorities] should make people shut their mouths and get off their butts and do something instead of talking about it.” More particular problems were also expressed by local people. One resident said that Fort Stockton needed the following:

Better selection of groceries so we are not forced to spend our money out of town; more eating facilities as everything is packed at noon; more concerts and performances by pianists, guitarists, bands and others. Also, people have to be more polite to each other; yes, we need checkers and workers who are polite and caring.

Another resident tried to summarize what would make Fort Stockton a better community:

We need to get rid of both drug pushers and the users. We need family oriented activities and more entertainment options. We also need housing, better leaders, stronger schools, better teacher pay and better teachers. Also, we need more grocery stores in town and more places to eat.

The quality of life in Fort Stockton is constrained by the lack of leisure amenities and opportunities. It must be noted that although Fort Stockton has some great facilities such as the library and the schools, which are well-preserved and have state-of-the-art equipment, the children and adolescents currently are limited in their leisure choices (i.e., burger places, three swimming pools, and a number of parks and fields for sports). In response to that limitation, a new plaza which will include alternative recreation opportunities is being built. This indicates a concerted effort by community leaders to improve quality of life in order to prevent residents from leaving. One resident said:

They are trying to keep local people and their income in town. For example, there is not a cinema and many go to Odessa for the night. RIATA gave the money to build the Plaza because it wants more employees and to attract more people to Fort Stockton. So it is trying to make life more exciting here, by helping to provide more opportunities to have fun.

The town's appearance, specifically the high number of deserted buildings, lack of sidewalks and limited number of trees is another area of concern. One resident underscored the need for "more involvement from all citizens living in Fort Stockton to clean up trash and rundown buildings." Another resident agreed that they need "to clean up the town and make it nice to the eyes with more people involved to help carry out community beautification projects."

In its effort to enhance the quality of life in the area, Fort Stockton bided and was selected as a demonstration site by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to be one of the two towns in the state of Texas to receive funding for research on health and physical activity promotion in consultation with the UT-Austin. The implementation of the program required a coalition of groups and institutions from throughout the community. The Extension Office in co-operation with the Recreation Department, the

Chamber and other community entities formed the Lifestyle Coalition that supports, promotes and informs people about a healthy way of life.

In terms of community involvement the existing voluntary groups and social clubs encourage residents to participate. Two major ones are the Rotary Club and Lions Club. The first meets every Thursday morning and its agenda includes major community issues, new events, as well as calls for action or assistance (i.e., volunteers) for specific events. Similarly, Lions Club meets every Wednesday and deals with sensitive issues (e.g., drugs in school) and strives to increase awareness in certain community problems. These voluntary groups shape significantly the types and extent of citizens' involvement in the community events. The social fabric of Fort Stockton is also characterized by the religious affiliation of residents. In Fort Stockton there are several religious denominations such as Baptists, Catholics, Episcopalians, Lutherans, Methodists, Presbyterians, etc. Churches have the capacity to influence people to participate in community events and thus develop the volunteer base of the town. In this regard, the existing ministerial alliance between different denominations helps to unify the community and coordinate the supply of volunteers to community events. It also helps to alleviate poverty and to some extent overcome racial or dogmatic differences and ultimately mobilize the residents to work for the betterment of the community.

Fort Stockton draws heavily on its history in order to form an identity. The town has been promoted as part of the West and there are still signs of the West's value system, which is characterized by a pioneering spirit, contest for profit and property, and cultural dominance (Flores, 2000). People in their daily lives, however, do not reveal a (Western) collective identity; they seem to be more concerned about the problems of the groups they belong to. The unifying point of the community is their struggle for



economic prosperity and to overcome the town's innate shortcomings (i.e., distant location, very hot climate, low education, etc.). The ethnic relations are not revealed at first glance. There are possibly some tensions or even divisions but it appears that there is an "alliance" between the political and economic elites of Hispanics and Anglos. The first have the City Council governance and the County governance is shared equally by both of them. Thus, people from both ethnic groups hold key leadership positions and they all work together towards the growth, development and prosperity of the town.

The derivation of conclusions about the condition of ethnic relations would be incomplete without the consideration of the historical context. A doctoral dissertation about the life of Hispanic people in Fort Stockton during 1930-45 is particularly informative (Flores, 2000). According to the author the injuries of past racial injustices, though healed, remain part of Fort Stockton's collective memory. It took generations to build bridges that facilitate mutual understanding and make reconciliation easier between Hispanic and Euro-American people. Now it appears that they have learned to work together in the context of the community. And when this is not possible due to the remaining racial prejudice at least local people do not create "the impossible barriers marked so starkly by Division Street." (Flores, 2000)

Today, although the current reconciliation of ethnic tensions in the community is not without challenges, it offers a more fair-minded social arena where people of any ethnic group can participate. The story of Hispanic people in Fort Stockton is not different from the ones that other ethnic minorities have in the U.S. In the epilogue of her dissertation, Flores describes the ethnic relations and current situation of Hispanic people as follows:

Mexican Americans in Fort Stockton have crossed many types of rivers since their ancestors first arrived in the 1850s. In spite of the adversities of

the past, many families continue to live in the community. They continue to speak Spanish in their daily life and in their worship. Many maintain allegiance to the Catholic faith; others have chosen to express their belief differently. Mexican American men and women participate in electoral; they dare to seek the mayor's post and the county judge's position. As assistant superintendents and principals they oversee the operations of the school system and teach at every level and discipline. The newspaper recognizes their achievements; although it does not yet employ a Mexican American reporter. As businessmen and women, they constitute a large and strong enough group to organize a Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. They no longer live in only one section of town; they live in bicultural neighborhoods and intermarriage is no longer viewed as a rare occurrence. The majority of the native Mexican Americans enjoy the good life; [...] Fort Stockton is a good community. It wasn't always so. But persistence and endurance won out. There must be some appeal to the community for newcomers, especially from Mexico, continue to come and proceed to raise their children and build the community anew, not without difficulties. New arrivals in the community face certain disdain from the 'old' Mexican families; before full acceptance into the community they have to demonstrate that they possess strong orthodox religious faith by attending church services. When their children behave well and respectfully, the family reveals its worthy character and can be incorporated into the community. Unlike the pioneer families, newcomers do not face undue economic barriers; their skills and competence gain such jobs as are available in the small community. The 'old' families make more class distinctions now than in the days when they faced racial discrimination in every facet of their lives. (pp. 299-300)

#### **THE ROLES OF SPORT AND CULTURAL EVENTS IN FORT STOCKTON**

Fort Stockton hosts an extensive array of events throughout the course of the year. These include a number of prominent events and a plethora of smaller events. The prominent events include the Big Bend and Road Runner open road races (two of the few open automobile races in the USA), Sheep-Dog Trials (an annual national event where contestants compete in sheep-dog handling), and Water Carnival (the most important local cultural festival). Indicative smaller events include the Pioneer Days (an event reviving the history of the town), the Summer Off the Patio (a series of concerts featuring country music), the Blue Moon concert series featuring different kinds of popular music,

a Flag Retirement ceremony, a Livestock show, as well as high school football games, horse shows, rodeo, softball and baseball, basketball, and golf tournaments. Table 4.5 lists a summary of the major events and their descriptions respectively.

**Table 4.5: Major Sport & Cultural Events**

<b>Event</b>	<b>Organizer</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Major Elements</b>	<b>Target Markets</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
High School Football (Recurring home games)	Athletic Department	Sport Competition	Game, Marching Band Music	Local Fans, Visiting Teams & Fans	Football season
Big Bend & Road Runner Open Road Races	Tourism Department	Sport Tourism	Race, Welcome Parties, Car Show, Parade, Banquet	Open Road Racers	End of April, Beginning of October
Water Carnival	Water Carnival Association	Community Celebration	Synchronized Swimming & Choreographed Dance Acts, Beauty Pageant, Parade	Locals, Families, School Reunions, Neighboring Visitors	3 <sup>rd</sup> Weekend July
Motorcycle Road Runner Rally	Motorcycle Road Runner Committee	Recreation	Bike Games, Vendors, Live Music	Local & Neighboring Bikers	Beginning August
Harvest Fest	Tourism Department	Community Celebration	Vendors, Live Music, Sports, Farmer's Market, Wine Emporium, Car Show	Locals, Families, Neighboring Communities	Last Saturday August
Labor Day Weekend Fiesta	Labor Day Committee	Recreation	Vendors, Live Music, Car Show, Games, Sports	Local Hispanics	Labor Day
16 De Septiembre Fiesta	Hispanic Chamber	Cultural Celebration	Parade, Live Music, Games	Local Hispanics	16 September
Pioneer Days	Historic Fort Stockton	Education & History	Reenactment, Games	Schools, Locals	Beginning September
Sheep-Dog Trials	Tourism Department	Sport Tourism	Competition of Sheep-dogs Responding to Whistles	Sheep-dog Enthusiasts from USA & Abroad	3 <sup>rd</sup> Week January
Christmas at The Old Fort	Historic Fort Stockton	Cultural Celebration	Celebratory Festivities	Families	Christmas
Easter Egg Hunt	Chamber of Commerce	Cultural Celebration	Easter Celebration	Local Families	Easter
Shining Star of Texas Motorcycle Rally	Shining Star of Texas Motorcycle Committee	Recreation	Bean Run, Bike Games, Bike Show, Vendors, Live Music	Motorcycle Riders	4-6 May

Local event organizers do not view their town's events as an event portfolio. Instead they view the array of events as a way to achieve common objectives that address community issues. This legitimizes the event roles and embeds event implementations in a web of interrelations that epitomize the nature and character of an "informal" portfolio of events, which appears not to be there as a formalized structure but rather as an endogenous phenomenon and socially constructed configuration. Accordingly, the group of events is analyzed starting from their intended roles in order to discern the event portfolio characteristics, interrelations, and processes that facilitate or constrain implementation.

Fort Stockton residents seem to agree on the role of events. The purpose of prominent events is economic and tourism development, while the purpose of small events is to address the town's lack of leisure amenities and the community's apathy. Given the low income level of the residents most of the small events are free to the public providing affordable entertainment and a space for people to interact with each other. A resident said that the major role of the events in Fort Stockton is to "give people a sense of community. They are opportunities to become involved and to spend more time to getting to know our neighbors." A local official added:

[The purpose] is to bring the community together; the more people that are actively involved in this kind of events the more people will work together and share the same space together. If we don't have events, then people will not come together and the whole community falls apart.

The distinction between prominent and smaller events and the different roles they have appears to be well crystallized in local officials' minds. A local official pointed out:

When we have something like the Road Race or the Water Carnival where people are coming in from out of town, the hotels and restaurants are busy, the gas stations are busy, so this affects us economically. Small events like the 4<sup>th</sup> of July event might attract some people from nearby areas for the

day, but they won't spend the night here, they won't spend much money, so these events are mainly for the community to get together.

Another local official categorized the community's events as follows:

There are two types of events. One is to bring in people from outside of the community to spend money and the other is to provide entertainment for those inside the community. Both are very important. The concerts and sport activities and extracurricular activities are in the school system; in the whole community the school system provides a lot of entertainment through extracurricular activities that the community is involved in. The more that it's going on, the more people that are involved the more vital the community is. So the more events you have the more interaction you have in the community and the community is more vibrant. So it's very important. It brings the community together.

Another local official pointed out the economic and social purposes of events that are grounded on (and in turn project) the local organization's efforts to collaborate:

I think that [the purpose of events] it is a bit of: 1) bringing the community together, having things for the community to do as a group, and I think that makes more community; 2) lots of the things that people do help hotels and restaurants make business; and 3) I think it is the camaraderie around the people who participate and do things together because I think Fort Stockton is blessed that all the organizations work together and have lots to do, which makes us a strong community and we are proud of it.

The prominent events aim to attract visitors from outside the community and yield economic benefits through their spending in local hotels and restaurants. Fort Stockton has been very resourceful. It has utilized the public roads for car races, the availability of sheep and land for the Sheep-Dog Trials and the elements of history and tradition for the cultural celebratory event of Water Carnival. Sport has also been a strategic community asset either by being staged on its own or as an event element in cultural events helping attract visitors to participate or attend the prominent and smaller events.

As an event organizer explained prominent events contribute beyond merely economic benefits:

The Big Bend Road Race's major role is to bring business to Fort Stockton, it's a tourism thing. There are a lot of racers who come out here

every year for it, so it's an economic boost to the community - hotels, food, shopping, etc. [During] Water Carnival there are a lot of school reunions, so there are a lot of people coming back to Fort Stockton; it's an economic thing. Both events also provide an outlet for leisure and entertainment [for locals]; a lot of people take part in it, so it really builds up our community with the volunteer opportunities; a kind of an integral part of keeping everyone involved in the community.

In addition to the economic benefits, there is a strong emphasis to unify the community and events are a major catalyst towards this end. Although ethnic relations in town have been reconciled, there are still cultural differences between Anglos and Hispanics that preclude, in some cases, mutual understanding and cooperation. Furthermore, the lack of education and the large number of people living in poverty accentuate the social problems. In response to these problems, there is an intention to utilize events as a means to bring the community together and facilitate social interaction among residents.

The inclusion of sport in the town's festivities helps to cultivate a sense of community. In this regard, sport activities have been blended with cultural festivities as an element to illustrate and reaffirm cultural traditions and ideals. For example, the Water Carnival features synchronized swimming acts performed only in groups, which symbolize and celebrate the area's available spring water that gave birth to the town as it was first built as a fort in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This celebration creates a symbolic social space for community's residents to "be ritualized" in the spirit of the community and the inclusion of sport cements the ideal of collective physical effort towards the accomplishment of shared goals.

Furthermore, the considerable interest that people have in sports bolsters the appeal that events have for the community and may influence the nature of public discourse. The symbolism that is cultivated by the sport-related activities of the above

events shapes a metaphoric public conversation about the values, ideals or concerns of the community. For example, synchronized swimming in Water Carnival signifies that sport activities are not only competitive but also cooperative physical endeavours where everyone can participate towards common goals. Accordingly, an underlying discourse is transferred to the rest of events in Fort Stockton.

Sport events occupy a salient position among the community's other types of events in Fort Stockton's portfolio. As one resident pointed out:

I think that our events are more recreational; in January our big event here is a huge Live Stock show, in February we have sporting events with the schools and the basketball teams, in March we start with the baseball season in schools, in April we have the Big Bend Road Race event, so it's mainly sports and recreational, we don't put that much educational, cultural etc. In the Harvest Fest they have a softball tournament associated with it and after they have a bike ride to the vineyards.

Another resident responded regarding the appeal of local people to sport and cultural events:

People probably go more to sporting events, because the sporting events here are mainly children participating, so the parents go to watch their kids, and I would say that this is probably more important here than the cultural events. If the high school football team is winning even more people will go to the games.

The opportunity that sport events provide for parents to attend their children's participation and engage in social interaction with other parents fosters the family character. This is a characteristic of a small rural community where family networks constitute the nucleus of social life. Thus, in addition to the affective and symbolic identifications that sport events offer for Fort Stockton residents, their extensive appeal is functionally explained by the need for creating opportunities wherein families shape the tight-knit fabric of a rural community. The family character in turn is taken in consideration when planning cultural events. Planners make sure they incorporate

activities that appeal to all family members and include sport events or sport activities. From this perspective, sport and cultural events are innately symbiotic in Fort Stockton's event portfolio and their parallels foster the development of an integrated approach in which events share common objectives, resources and markets.

Most importantly, events are embedded in the town's effort to improve the quality of life and thus constitute a major part of the policies by the Chamber of Commerce, which along with its mission to support business development in the area has also a Community Development division with the following focus:

To support community growth, unity and enhancement by expanding and strengthening community participation to create common goals that generate positive and constructive actions to enhance the quality of life for all Fort Stockton residents.

Towards the above end, the Community Development division organizes or sponsors local events. In addition to the explicit purposes of events, the Chamber's involvement serve the aim to use events as a marketing tool that promotes Fort Stockton as a small vibrant town where people have a choice to participate in leisure activities. Similarly, the School District in promoting the facilities of the school system and quality of education in the area features the Recreation Department and the sport programs and events that are organized for the youth. Overall, the School and events are tools projecting that Fort Stockton is "a nice place to live and raise children" as local people proclaim. This aims to prevent out-of-town migration and attract new people in town.

Furthermore, events serve another purpose. Providing events in town as affordable entertainment opportunities can keep the local people from going to the closest cities and spend their income there. Hence, this is a way to maintain and circulate the income of the residents in town. An event organizer articulated this rationale:



We always try to keep the most people here in Fort Stockton by providing events locally. That's why we have different concerts with the Chamber and the Museum so there are different things for the community to do. Yes, we are a small town, we don't have a mall, we don't have a movie theater, we would love to have one, but you don't have to be bored here because we have so many things going on. And that's what we always try to do: to provide events for residents to stay here and spend their money in Fort Stockton.

Even though the events play a vital part in community's life, locals recognize the limitations inherent due to the small size of the town:

We are a small community, we don't have a movie theater, we don't have a bowling hall; we don't have a lot of things that in a bigger city you would do. So the events give people something to do and help the community stay pretty close. I think it's important to keep offering all these events. But the truth is that people still go to Midland to see a movie before they go to an event here in Fort Stockton and there are still not a lot of things [leisure choices] for the kids to do around here.

Events are temporal interventions and should not be viewed as a panacea that can resolve innate weaknesses, chronic problems or structural imbalances in a rural region. An event portfolio can help to maintain and enhance the desired impact of events and become itself a permanent intervention if it is part of a broader policy agenda complemented by and complementing the objectives in other policy domains. Hence, the lack of leisure opportunities in Fort Stockton and the enhancement of the quality of life have to be redressed through the improvement of recreational, educational and public service amenities. This makes the planning of event implementations a more delicate process for a small rural community attempting to utilize its available scarce resources and maximize social and economic benefits. Event organizers and community leaders in Fort Stockton appear to realize this actuality and hence they move to integrate the sport and cultural events into the local policy agenda and community network structures.

## EVENTS AND TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

The tourism revenues to the City's government yielded from occupancy tax and miscellaneous income was \$477,473 in 2005-06 as was officially reported in the City Council's budget. There is no breakdown of the direct or indirect contributions of events to this total. In the same lines there is no consistent and accurate estimation of the contribution from each of the events in the portfolio. City officials and event organizers focus on covering the expenses of events and attracting attendance to their events, which are expected to derive revenues for the community. Though for prominent events that have economic orientation, there are discussions and elementary calculations after their end about the direct economic impact. Locals believe that events are the driving force for yielding tourism revenues in the community. Considering the small size of the community, the arrival or passage of travelers and event attendants is easily noticed by local people who intuitively perceive it as positive. This perception may contribute to the lack of consistent and accurate economic evaluation of every event's contribution.

Fort Stockton utilizes its events as attractions for tourists, even though community officials know that their town will never be a destination for tourists. For this reason, they link events to local attractions, products and services in an attempt to attract nearby visitation or passing-by tourists. Their main tools are printed programs of events, fliers and brochures that are available at events. They contain information about attractions and local services such as hotels and restaurants. A local official explained how they integrate events with the community's tourism product mix:

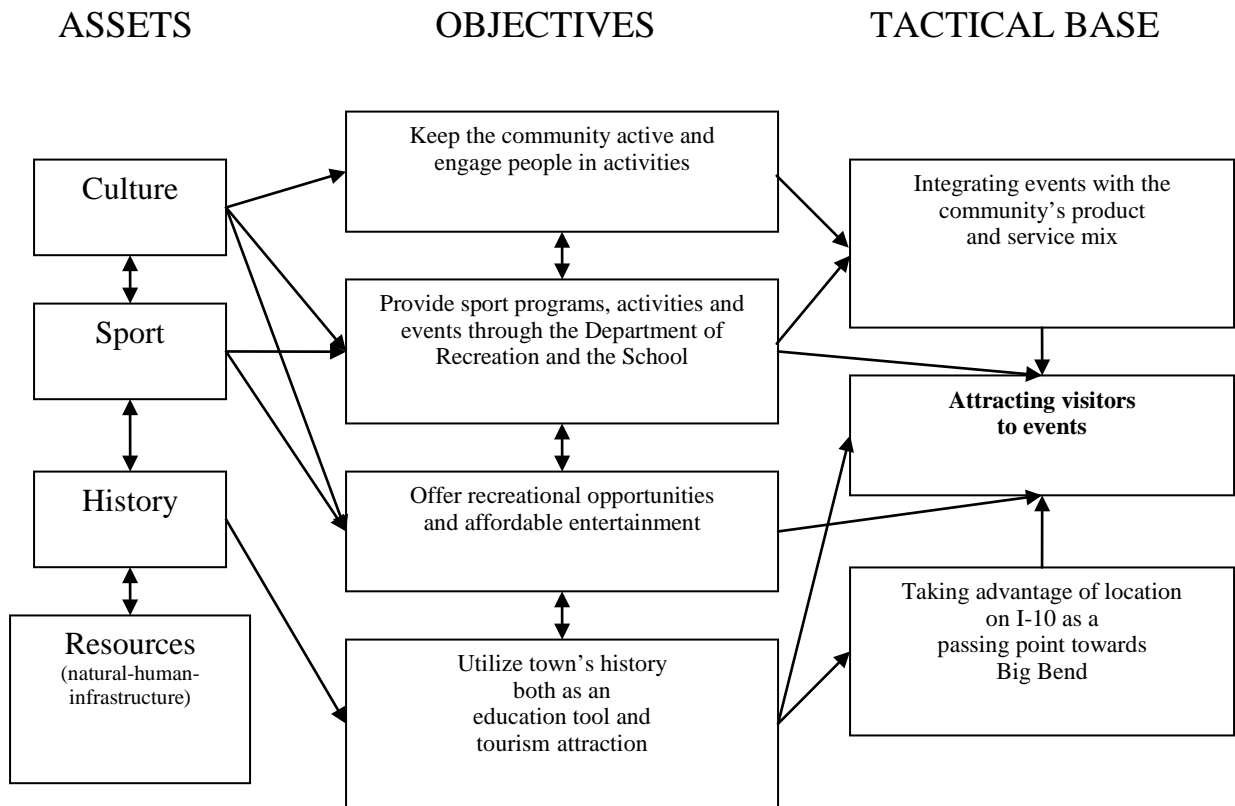
The events are a good tactic for tourism. We are not a destination spot, we are not a place that someone drives to come to; the primary goal of our special events is for people to stay an extra day or make people be here an extra five hours and spend additional dollars in the community. That's basically what I see as the development of tourism. [Nobody] will come here to spend a week; that is just not gonna happen. We are a great jump

off point to the Big Bend National Park and we are in the middle of the major US East-West Freeway and we try to take advantage of that.

The main issue is to find ways to lengthen the one-night visitors' stay in Fort Stockton by providing opportunities that could entice visitors to stay in town, spend money and perhaps visit again or "spread the word" to other travelers. Currently, Fort Stockton utilizes the assets of cultural tradition, history, natural environment and sporting facilities to organize sport and cultural events that are appealing to both residents and visitors. Thus, Fort Stockton has become a national sport tourism destination for aficionados of open road races and sheep-dog contests. Also, the major cultural events blend sport activities into their programs promoting Fort Stockton as an active and vivacious community. The event portfolio is characterized by a supporting network that includes augmented similar event activities (e.g., sports, games, arts, etc.) and complementary event services (e.g., accommodation, dining, etc.). Figure 4.1 depicts the context of Fort Stockton's event tourism development based on the community's assets, objectives and tactical scope.

A discussion about events and tourism development from the scope of a supporting network should take into account that Fort Stockton is a small rural community, and consequently, communication and collaboration between event organizers and tourism services providers may occur due to family or friendship networks. Most importantly, in the context of Fort Stockton's event portfolio, the deliberations and synergies demonstrate an escalating potential for tourism development. It must be noted that apart from the apparent effort of integrating events with the community's product and service mix, there are no strategies in place for systematic event leverage in the context of the portfolio in order to maximize the economic benefits of events. Yet, the planning for event tourism development moves towards this direction.

**Figure 4.1: Mapping Fort Stockton's Event Tourism**



In particular, the budgeting process of the City of Fort Stockton with the allocation of funds to the Fort Stockton Convention and Visitors' Bureau (CVB) illustrates an effort that events be used as a means for sport tourism development. During the summer of 2006, concerns regarding the 2007 budget were raised, specifically regarding CVB funding. As a result, a special joint meeting of the City Council and the CVB was called at the request of Fort Stockton City Council. The issue was that the proposed budget for the CVB had all the funds already allocated, with no money for contingency purposes. Clearly, this limited the capacity of the CVB to allocate funds for other programs, events or activities. In the meeting there were suggestions that the CVB

board or the City should investigate as many grant avenues as they possibly could in order to bring in more funds for the CVB.

The position of the City Council was that there is no need for the City to micro-manage the CVB because the City Council provides the guidelines and goals that the CVB should follow. These are based on the following grounds, as pointed out by City Council members:

The one constant in the economy of Fort Stockton, even during the oil bust, has always been our ability to fill our hotels everyday [with passing-by travelers]. We are not a destination, we are a location between destinations for travelers. So we need to get travelers to stay another day, or even a few more hours and a way to achieve that is through events and the promotion of our attractions. Therefore, we should train all front line personnel to send people to the Visitors' Center at the Chamber of Commerce, where they would be able to get information about all the things to do. (*Fort Stockton Pioneer*, July 27, 2006)

Clearly, the consensus that tourism is a major source of revenues for the local economy makes essential the need for Fort Stockton to have a powerful CVB board. This was emphasized by the City Council in other meetings that followed and everyone agreed that in order to be powerful, the CVB needs budget flexibility. In one of those meetings a new CVB board member, related his experience with a little league tournament held in Fort Stockton. During the tournament the board member had requested the visiting teams' parents to return to their hotels and inquire about local attractions in Fort Stockton and the surrounding area. Yet, as the parents reported back to the board member, the hotel clerks were unable to give them times, locations or other information about the local museums, shops and restaurants. On this basis, there was a suggestion for training of the employees who regularly meet the traveling public so that they are knowledgeable about local attractions and able to inform the visitors about them. This could represent a first step towards event leverage since the CVB has now identified a weakness of its

human capital that inhibits the attainment and magnification of event outcomes. It also implies the intention and potential for employing in the future tactics to lengthen visitors' stays and entice their spending through cross-leveraging tourism attractions and events.

In this regard, concerns are also raised over the skills of employees at tourism attractions (i.e., museums) to provide appropriate service to visitors as well as problems of service delivery in local shops, restaurants and hotels, which decrease the quality of Fort Stockton's tourism product, and subsequently constrain any leveraging efforts. It is a foundational shift, however, that the CVB starts addressing the need for educating and improving the human capital of local tourism-related services, which can facilitate in the future the effective and efficient implementation of event leverage strategies.

Moreover, the CVB appointed a committee to review and make recommendations about the budget before the upcoming budget workshop for the City Council. The goal was to release more funds for contingency purposes such as events that arise during the year, mainly those with the potential to increase tourism revenues. The result was a reduction of expenditures for salaries and operations to 66.5% of the total budget, which opened a contingency fund of \$45,948. This action illustrates the intention of the City of Fort Stockton to utilize events for tourism development. Anyone in the community can apply for funding from CVB to organize events that will bring tourism revenues.

Contingency funds are critical for event sport tourism. Fort Stockton is an example of a beneficial synergy between the CVB and the Recreation Department that makes use of contingency funds. In particular, when the Recreation Department plans to host a new event in Fort Stockton, it requests funding from the CVB in order to cover the expenses of the event. The CVB approves the request on the basis that the upcoming event would bring tourism revenues to the community that would exceed the cost of the

event. Therefore, the contingency funds constitute an asset that facilitates the organization of sport events and allows flexibility in hosting new events.

From the standpoint of tourism marketing, it is interesting how Fort Stockton utilizes events for promoting itself. In particular, in most of the events, which have different target audiences, the Big Bend national park is noted in the events' marketing collateral such as brochures, posters, and sometimes fliers in order to give people an idea of where Fort Stockton is because people recognize Big Bend, but they may not recognize Fort Stockton. The underlying reason that Big Bend is noted is that Fort Stockton attempts to take advantage of its close proximity to Big Bend and create positive associations in the minds of event visitors. This aims to change the image of the town, which was promoted until recently as part of the Wild West. A local official pointed out:

A couple of years ago there were some taglines that I didn't like; one was "The real West," or "The real Texas" and my personal opinion was that this is a misrepresentation because we do not have, as other parts of Texas do have, places where tourists can go and ride a horse, and buy a hat, and you can go see cowboys in a ranch, etc. So this is a false representation, yes we are a small town in Texas, but no we don't have cowboys walking down the street. You know a lot of people have the perception that a part of Texas is that; a lot of the European market has this perception about Texas because this is what is promoted and expected. This is my tagline: "The beginning of your Big Bend adventure" because that is accurate and that is true and Big Bend on surveys I think is one of the top 50 destinations that people in Texas travel. Fort Stockton is not known at all, you can go to a travel show and they will ask you "Fort Stockton, where is that?" But when you show the Big Bend on the map, people will understand where Fort Stockton is. That's the key: the geography, Fort Stockton is in the middle of I-10.

The most important sport event that attracts visitors from across the United States is the Big Bend Open Road Race. The considerable appeal of the event to aficionados of open road races in the United States presented a good opportunity for Fort Stockton to explicitly associate the town with Big Bend by naming the race as the Big Bend Open

Road Race. In this fashion, Fort Stockton utilizes this event as a sport tourism attraction to promote itself in the tourism market.

Similarly, a new motorcycle rally event, which is included in the CVB's calendar of events, was named Shining Star of Texas promoting thus the official logo and desired image of Fort Stockton. This is consistent with the town's effort to build an image denoting the identity of the town:

"Fort Stockton A Shining Star of Texas" is officially the motto of Fort Stockton and now there is a logo to go with it. The design was submitted and unveiled to the public Tuesday night at the beginning of the City Council meeting. "The logo will be used as new items are ordered by the city" said the Director of City Services, "we are not going to throw out everything we have." The city will be painting the logo on police cars and other city vehicles, as time and money permit. (*Fort Stockton Pioneer*, May 23, 2007)

Yet, these examples are not part of a strategy to leverage events in advertising and promotions to build a destination image. They rather constitute ad hoc responses for taking advantage of the publicity created by the events and their appeal to visitors in order to make Fort Stockton well-known and reach tourist markets. The potential for leverage exists as these examples demonstrate; what is needed is the formulation of a strategy pursuant to attaining the end of building Fort Stockton's destination image.

Finally, Fort Stockton hosts and promotes consistently the Sheep-Dog Trials, an event that attracts dog handler aficionados from across the United States. The following article is posted in the city's official website:

The Winter Sheep Dog Trials brought sheep dog enthusiasts to Fort Stockton for the third year in a row. The event was held from Jan. 6 through Jan. 9, 2005 east of Fort Stockton adjacent to the Silhouette Shooting range. The trials brought sheep dog handlers from as far as Wyoming, California, Colorado, Arizona, Georgia, and Tennessee. Sheep dog trials are the ultimate test of the ability of the dog handler and his dog. The dogs are trained to respond to different voice commands and whistles. "You begin the competition with a certain amount of points. Through the competition, points are deducted from the competitors," said a veteran dog



handler and trials judge from Sanderson. The handlers are judged on different things. For example, on how straight the dog runs the course or how the dog relates to the handlers commands. [...] The Sheepdog Winter Trials are a cooperative effort of the City of Fort Stockton, Pecos County, the Economic Development Committee, and the Convention and Visitor's Bureau. "We'd also like to thank the local cowboys who helped us out. They were essential to the success of the trials." The event is held every year, on the second weekend of January. The event is free to the public. (Official website of the City of Fort Stockton, 2005)

The availability of natural resources has been critical for the organization of this event. Fort Stockton has been able to capitalize on them as one of the event organizers explained:

What is important is that here a number of ranchers are into the sheep business because for the dog-handling competition you obviously must have sheep; so that is one big key factor. The second factor was that we have the land available and we were able to build a farming field that met all their requirements.

#### **EVENTS AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

From a community development standpoint, the entire manifestation of expressive practices takes place mainly in the festivities of Water Carnival. This event creates symbolic social spaces where event participants and spectators share and construct common ideals and values. The celebratory character of Water Carnival draws heavily on historical and cultural elements that are "dramatized" and enacted in the form of a staged performance that is accompanied by music, dancing, parade and beauty pageants. Performance is a focal avenue for the expression of local identity.

Water Carnival celebrates the local affluence of water and requires approximately one month of rehearsal time for those that will perform. Each year there is a different show and the topics of theatrical acts vary. The enthusiasm of all citizens is evident when they talk about the Water Carnival. They consider it as the most important celebration

that unifies the community. Former residents who migrated away return to Fort Stockton to attend the Water Carnival. It is a meeting point for old friends and school reunions are scheduled. The staging of this “social drama” seems to “ritualize” community residents in constructing a shared meaning and helps to shape a collective identity. This celebration becomes a place where people make a statement about Fort Stockton. They demonstrate that it is a friendly and vivacious place. The inclusion of synchronized swimming provides the avenue for the expression of a corporal meta-language. In this regard, the rest of smaller events in Fort Stockton come to complete, enhance and continue the expression of cultural practices and community unification during the course of the year. Even though Fort Stockton faces socio-economic challenges, the events provide the town with an aura of festive eudemonism and sociability.

Event organizers emphasize the family character in most of the events by including activities for the whole family. This way the family and social networks are maintained and enhanced. The structural elements of the event design that support the creation of symbolic social spaces encompass sport and culture, which help to engender shared meanings. In this context, events prompt a sense of celebration and enable social interaction among event visitors. By offering different events during the course of a year, Fort Stockton brings people together and enhances social networks.

For example, Fort Stockton hosts a plethora of concerts during the year. The music varies from country to popular rock music. During the summer there is the “Summer off the Patio” series of concerts organized by the Annie Riggs Museum, which features acoustic country music. The target audiences for this event are mainly elderly couples of Anglo origin. Visitors are welcome and have the opportunity to view the museum exhibits during the concerts. This event is an opportunity to inform about and

engage people in Fort Stockton's history. Also, it is an opportunity for friends to go out since there are not many other recreational places in town. Another series of concerts is organized by the Chamber, which features rock and roll music in one of the town's parks. The target audiences are mainly families. Therefore, these events provide a recurring entertainment option for the citizens of Fort Stockton. They are targeted at either families or senior citizens and are free of charge. Although some types of music appeal to particular segments of the population, the variety of existing concerts covers all tastes. Thus, the concerts come to complement Fort Stockton's major events providing people, on a regular basis, opportunities to relate with each other, entertain and build relationships.

Also, the sport events offered by the School and the Recreation Department engender social value for the community. The participation of the youth in recreational and school competitions brings numerous sport events into town that become spaces for social interaction and community integration. Furthermore, many of the sport tournaments bring visitors to Fort Stockton who spend money in hotels and restaurants. Thus, even when the primary purpose of particular events is social, there are still commercial interests. However, it seems that the commercialization of events supports their social orientation. This is explicit in the sense that events in Fort Stockton have a dual role: to attract visitors and entice their spending, hence contributing to the economic development of the community, and to provide recreational opportunities for local people to engage in social interaction enhancing thus the town's social capital.

The provision of recreational opportunities through sport and cultural events is intended to build community cohesiveness and engage residents in the ongoing public discourse. The events provide the opportunity for residents to come together and share

common values. Also, the events are intended to create a shared meaning and a collective identity with the involvement of residents as volunteers or participants in the events. Although the intent and certain practices in event planning achieve social outcomes, it appears that there are no strategies in place for the systematic social leverage of the event portfolio. Rather, each event based on its own innate characteristics enables the attainment of social outcomes, which is further facilitated by the commonly used available resources and the mimetic transfer of successful practices among events taking place due to the small size of the community.

In particular, sociability inside the venues is enabled in most of the events where attendees are encouraged to arrive early or to stay late (from morning till midnight). Socialization is enhanced by the special configuration of the parks. There are tables around food vendors for people to sit, eat, and talk fostering social interaction. Similarly, sociability beyond the venue is enabled by event-related social events. For example, in Water Carnival public meetings and talks about the town's developments take place. Also, school reunions are scheduled during Water Carnival; dinners and meetings are organized where sociability and reconnection of the community are fostered. In the open road races, there are parties in the park and a car show, which create social mixers for participants and attendees. This is a means to enable event participants and attendees to meet and socialize.

Moreover, Water Carnival and the open road races include in their programs parades, which amplify a sense of celebration. The theming of these events appears to accompany the sense of ongoing celebration with event-related signs and decorations in public spaces and businesses. Event publicity for the races and Water Carnival uses narratives published in the local newspaper to portray the desired of the community as a

friendly community with a small-town charm and unique characteristics, which responds to the existential needs of residents. Yet, narratives are not being used for other events. Overall, the current practices and event implementations constitute a base with a potential for the formulation and implementation of joint (and coordinated) social strategies to leverage the series of events in the portfolio for meaningful community development.

In general, another aspect of using events in community development policies is the identification and prevention of negative social impacts caused by events. In all interviews and discussions with people in Fort Stockton no one referred to any unintended consequences caused by events that may constrain community development. A common response was the following, as someone articulated: “Not that I’ve seen. Pretty much the outcomes are as were expected. I don’t see any negatives associated with any of the events.” This attitude is grounded on a determination of community leaders to focus on positive aspects of the community. As one official said: “We gotta be positive; anytime we say something negative about the community, it’s bad.”

Consequently, it appears that there is rhetoric by most people including public officials and local residents declaring their positive feelings about events and their desire to host more events that will bring new people to town and revitalize its economy. Thus, there is not an explicit controversy over the hosting of particular events and any existing tensions are covered under the proclaimed benefits the events intend to derive, which legitimize the development of the event portfolio. The main criterion for the continuation of the events is the success in terms of appealing to and attracting the participation and attendance of local people and visitors, which is perceived to derive a range of economic and social outcomes.

The perceived success of events and the mono-dimensionally positive attitude towards events create a two-fold source of implications; one constructive and the other problematic. On the one hand, it does not help to identify and resolve tensions created by or revealed through events. On the other hand, it facilitates the effort for staging new events in order to achieve particular purposes. It seems that in the context of the event portfolio this effort for event production is enabled by capitalizing on the knowledge and experience that already exists in organizing events in the portfolio. A common practice is the utilization of the same resources, such as facilities and volunteer pools. However, the lack of attention to identify and resolve any unintended consequences may magnify the tensions within the portfolio as will be examined further in the next chapters.

It seems that there is a complex interplay of implicit and explicit intentions that maintain the above antithesis. A strategic approach could help ground event planning and implementation as well as the organization of the portfolio without fomenting internal tensions that may hinder community development. For example, an event that appears to have a clear strategy is the International Basketball Tournament with teams coming from Mexico. This Tournament represents an example of strategic event planning. It is a deliberate effort by Fort Stockton's officials to host a sport event in order to build better relationships with towns in Mexico. Such a relationship may enhance the civic esteem of the Hispanic population and may yield economic revenues. A resident pointed out:

We just had some teams from Mexico. These basketball teams came over here about a month ago and they played a basketball tournament. The economic development office was involved; they got the basketball teams here and then they invited the mayors from the cities of Mexico. They met our guys and created some better relationships.

In this case, the Chamber of Commerce sponsored the International Basketball Tournament as the first annual Border Hoop Fest. The tournament matched up teams

from Cuahatemoc, Delecias, Ojinaga and Chihuahua, Mexico with teams from Midland and Fort Stockton to compete for the championship of Border Hoop Fest 2005. The weekend activities kicked off with some old West Texas hospitality featuring a hamburger dinner for the visiting Mexico teams in one of the town's parks. The games took place at the Williams Special Event Center in the high school. In the opening ceremony the Mayor welcomed officially to Fort Stockton all teams, coaches and dignitaries. All Fort Stockton residents were encouraged to attend and there was considerable publicity about this event by the Chamber, which attempted to extend ties and establish relationships with towns in Mexico. As officially stated this tournament was intended as a step to open up dialogs between Fort Stockton and Mexican communities that may become NAFTA trading partners (*Fort Stockton Pioneer*, May 5, 2005).

The political decision to bond relationships with towns in Mexico took advantage of the town's facilities to host a basketball tournament. While this is a common practice in the international diplomatic arena for countries and big cities, Fort Stockton constitutes an example of how a small rural community may utilize its sporting facilities and its capacity to organize sport events for the accomplishment of broader socio-political and economic goals. Most importantly, it demonstrates the potential for leveraging that Fort Stockton's event portfolio holds. In this case event organizers and public officials attempted to create and enhance business relationships with NAFTA trading partners capitalizing on sport as a substantial community asset and leveraging a sport event as a policy tool in regional development.

It must be noted that event production aiming at community development, even if it takes place out of the context of the event portfolio, is essentially influenced by it and maintains three major characteristics: (1) the family character of events, (2) the

importance of sports, and (3) collaboration among different city departments for staging events. An example is the Family Play Day, a one-time event organized by the Lifestyle Coalition with the purpose to promote physical activity and nutrition. It targeted families and featured games for the children, sport activities, bicycle driving, and booths with health-related information.

The Family Play Day demonstrates the willingness and capacity for cooperation among Fort Stockton's entities in the organization and hosting of events. In this one-time event a number of community organizations, groups and individuals took part such as the Extension Office, the Recreation Department, community health services, nursing students and the hospital, the Library, the Fire Department, the Police, City Councilmen and County Commissioners, and other community organizations. The event attracted the participation of dozen of families that had their children playing with the games that the Recreation Department had brought for the event. There was also a softball tournament and a bike safety rodeo for children. A local official explained how all entities worked together in this event avoiding conflicting timing or over-scheduling of facilities:

In the Family Play Day the Recreation Department is also having a Softball Tournament in conjunction with it. So we are always working together, we always check each other's schedules, so there is not a conflict of over-scheduling or double-scheduling.

The addition of the softball tournament for children indicates from an organizational standpoint the close cooperation between the Recreation Department and other entities in town. It also reflects the importance of sports in town. A local official explained why the softball tournament was added:

We decided to do the Softball Tournament the same day with the Family Play Day (FPD), to get the participation, to get people to attend. We want the community to be able to go and support the teams and also people can go to the FPD and have a wellness experience for the whole family. There will be a number of outside communities that will also participate. They



will be coming to the tournament; we will only have two teams from Fort Stockton and all the rest from around the area, like seven or eight different communities will come in and we want them to see Fort Stockton during the FPD. Since there will be many activities when they don't play softball they are gonna be able to go over to the FPD.

### **CONCLUDING REMARKS**

Fort Stockton takes advantage of the town's facilities and natural resources to host a series of recurring events. There is a proliferation of events in the community that comprise an extended "informal" portfolio. Multiple events are employed to serve a variety of purposes, such as to revitalize local economy through tourism, improve the quality of life through offering recreational opportunities, build a positive image of the town, celebrate local identity and foster social interaction. Fort Stockton demonstrates a competence in event organization and production as well as mobilization of its integrated set of resources to support the use of events for the accomplishment of an array of social and economic purposes. In this context, sport is integrated in the structure and logic of the event portfolio, which utilizes sporting facilities and activities in events in synergy with other elements. This facilitates the planning of event implementations for achieving tourism and community development.

However, what seems to be missing is the employment of joint leverage strategies and tactics among the events in the portfolio (i.e., cross-leverage), which can help to attain and magnify the intended outcomes of events. Though the current infrastructure supporting events and their hitherto planning driven by a holistic perspective on events and their role in community and economic development represents a robust ground for the development of joint and coordinated social strategies to leverage the series of events in the portfolio for meaningful economic and community development.

The development of Fort Stockton's competence to host events can be traced to Water Carnival, the community's seminal celebration, which has been organized for over 70 years, and apparently has influenced the organization of new emerging events. From this standpoint, it seems that there is capitalization on capacity in event hosting engendered in Water Carnival and transferred to the other events. For this reason, the Water Carnival is examined thoroughly in the next chapter. Then, the analysis focuses on the rest of events and their interrelationships, and Water Carnival serves as the basis for comparison in order to discern commonalities and disparities throughout the event portfolio that shape its nature and character.

## **Chapter 5: Water Carnival**

The seminal event that defines Fort Stockton is the Water Carnival. This event is a cultural celebration, which takes place in the town's swimming pool within the community's major park (James Rooney Park). The swimming pool provides Fort Stockton with a unique site. Built on the natural Comanche springs, which provided in the past irrigation to the farm area north of town, the beauty and bounty of water has fascinated residents and tourists since the founding of the town. The water supply of Comanche Springs, as estimated, was about 60 millions gallons per day until 1950s when the increased demand for water caused the drying up of the natural springs.

The Water Carnival serves, therefore, as a remembrance of the town's history and a symbolic commemoration of the abundance of water that gave birth to the town. Along with this foremost purpose, Water Carnival has a number of meanings and roles in the community that are summarized by residents as bringing the community together by providing a common project to work on, attracting money to the community through visitation and bringing back migrated family members to visit Fort Stockton. The degree to which formal relationships or informal social networks interact and shape the meanings and/or roles of Water Carnival, both as a defining community event and strategic resource can be traced into the negotiated socio-economic and political arrangements that form the community's social order.

In general, the formation of a community's social order is interrelated with events (Handelman, 1990). It finds expression through events and may impose its own definition and interpretation of event meanings. In this respect, events may reaffirm the continuation of existing social order or on the other hand they can contest it and reshape

it. From this perspective, events can be viewed as manifestations of negotiated social conditions that are produced by the interplay between the patterning of social order and the problematics of public discourse. In such an analysis essentially useful are, Geertz's (1973) interpretation of events as stories that people tell about themselves and Turner's (1974, 1982, 1984) conceptualization of events as symbolic rituals and social dramas that make people instantiate shared meanings and stimulate collective action.

In this context, public discourse is a reflection of a community's needs and/or concerns and should be taken into account in the analysis and interpretation of events. Thus, the creation and understanding of the set of meanings that the Water Carnival conveys in the local community cannot be analyzed merely on the basis of history, tourism, or community building. If they are taken in isolation, they can represent a mono-dimensional view of what this event means to the community. Taking into consideration the context in which the events are conceived, planned and produced and how they relate to the formation of social order and discourse will reveal the multi-dimensional value of the event and its potential to derive social and economic benefits.

To delineate the context that defines Water Carnival, an account of the historical context of the event is taken into consideration. Then, the organization and design of Water Carnival is examined in relation to the patterns of social and ethnic relations that shape the event and in turn are re-shaped and re-confirmed by it. These are considered manifestations of dramaturgy that intend to cultivate the meanings that are extracted by the event and eventually enable the town of Fort Stockton to attain (through Water Carnival) desired social and economic results.

## **HISTORICAL ROOTS OF WATER CARNIVAL**

The first Water Carnival was organized in the summer of 1936. It was conceived by the Fort Stockton Lions Club and its main purpose was to create a festival in order to commemorate the Texas Centennial (i.e., 100 years of statehood). While other communities of Texas used many different ways of celebrating their state's 100<sup>th</sup> birthday, Fort Stockton chose to hold a program and show around the Comanche Springs pool. It seems that through this initiative the Fort Stockton Lions Club also intended to pay tribute to the springs because it contributed to the well-being and development of the entire region. The success of the Water Carnival made it a trademark of Fort Stockton and today it is part of the community's heritage. A Fort Stockton resident pointed out:

The Water Carnival was born because there used to be springs here, natural spring water, and the pool used to be a pretty good size open pool. In the 50s it dried up and Water Carnival became a yearly event reminding us of the springs. [...] We are here in the middle of Chihuahuan Desert and yet we have natural springs that flow in the middle of the desert. Water Carnival is part of the community's heritage now.

Thus, the beginning of Water Carnival in 1936 as a community production was designed to utilize and celebrate the Comanche Springs. For over seventy years, the Water Carnival has been the largest summer attraction in Fort Stockton. The first Water Carnival included a band concert presented by the Fort Stockton High School band, miniature golf in Rooney Park and swimming as well as diving events. Along with the Water Carnival, there were plans made for community and Boy Scout gatherings lasting three days. The themes of the show performances were based on popular American culture with icons and ideals of Hollywood, and in the first years authors from Hollywood were invited to write scripts for the event. The apparent connection of Water Carnival with Hollywood illustrates that Fort Stockton intended to create its own version of a Hollywood spectacle through which it could promote the local values and ideals.

After the first few years only local authors were asked to write scripts. Those were considered more meaningful and pertinent to the community context because they could convey better the community's values and ideas. Further, this proved to be a cost-effective tactic since it was expensive to buy scripts from Hollywood authors.

The Comanche Springs swimming pool that was built in the same location as the springs has had a central place in the community's history. The fact that Water Carnival is held at the Olympic size Comanche Springs swimming pool is highlighted by event organizers. They often state that the pool is a historic site in Fort Stockton's historic trail through the city and this information is printed in each year's event program. Also, it is often stated by local people that without Comanche Springs, Fort Stockton probably would never have existed. From the beginning, it had to be the bountiful springs that drew people like a magnet as they traveled through what is now known as the Trans-Pecos area.

Consequently, the Water Carnival provides a reference to the history of the town that can be instantiated by the whole community. It serves as the occasion that reminds people about the springs' importance by bringing the town's residents into this symbolically "sacred" space to share and maintain local history. This is often emphasized by Fort Stockton residents. For example, one resident pointed out:

I think that a lot of people don't really realize how important the Comanche Springs pool is until we have Water Carnival and they get down there and they see how all the Precinct is taking care of the pool. Of course the Water Carnival couldn't go on without the Comanche Springs pool. There were a few years that there was not water in the pool so we couldn't have Water Carnival.

Similarly, the vast majority of Fort Stockton residents agree that the waters of Comanche Springs definitely had much influence on the community and that led to the creation of a celebratory event. Next to the swimming pool lies the town's major park

(Rooney Park); there, a visitor finds posted more detailed information about the springs. In particular, there were six major gushing springs and the river they formed resulted from water seeping up through geological faults to the earth's surface. The reservoir, which supplied them was located in the formation known as "Trinity Sands." The springs, among the largest in all Texas, were one of the few good watering places in the arid region of West Texas desert. Since the beginning, they supplied water to Indians raiding into Mexico on the nearby Comanche war trail and also gold seekers traveling to California on the southern route, from 1849 and later. Butterfield overland mail stages stopped here as well. After 1859, the springs provided water to Fort Stockton, which was founded to protect the mail and to stop the Comanche raids. The springs began to be tapped for irrigation as early as 1875. By 1940 the spring flow was estimated at 40 million gallons per day. Demands on the springs were made by drilling many water wells close to its source, expanded farming, as well as other types of water use. By 1951, the springs were reduced to less than half of their original estimated flow, 17 million gallons per day, and a drought from 1951-57 created great demands on the spring water for irrigation. By 1953, the spring flow had dropped to 3 million gallons per day, and was no longer sufficient to keep the natural pool area filled. Comanche Springs ceased flowing above-ground and the community built the municipal swimming pool where the Water Carnival is held.

From the beginning, it was decided that the Water Carnival and its associated festivities would be held on an annual basis. Over the years, that led to the inclusion of Water Carnival in the community's tradition. Even though the springs have long ceased to flow above ground they have remained a symbol associated with the history of Fort Stockton, which local people strive to maintain and promote through Water Carnival. In

particular, one resident pointed out that “Water Carnival takes place in Comanche Springs pool, [which is an] historic site. The Buffalo soldiers’ camp [was located] there because of the springs.” The implicit association of Water Carnival with the Buffalo soldiers and the “pioneer spirit” of that era serves as a referent of meaning for the community’s West Texas identity. Fort Stockton has always been viewed and promoted by its residents as part of the West and hence the institutionalization of Water Carnival in the local community conveys a historical reference for Fort Stockton residents to identify themselves.

In functional terms, there are a number of roles that the Water Carnival served. First of all, the intent that shaped the organization of Water Carnival was to attract visitors to Fort Stockton and make the town a major recreational resort in the region. For this reason, community leaders conceived an event that would showcase the town’s main attractions. This celebration would take the form of an entertainment unique to this section of Texas; a Water Carnival, to bring recognition and tourists to Comanche Springs and the area. The potential of the community’s aforementioned attractions was considered by community leaders, as this excerpt from County Judge Records in 1936, shows:

Comanche Springs draws large crowds of people from all our surrounding towns who enjoy these bathing facilities without any cost to them; consequently Pecos County, through its fine park and swimming pool, renders a service not only to its own people, but to all the surrounding counties who are less fortunately situated in regard to water supply. This swimming pool and park is also quite a drawing card for tourists that travel the highways through Pecos Count. (County Judge Records, 1936)

Second, messages for encouraging beautification of Fort Stockton through the available water were conveyed by the event. In particular, the first programs of Water Carnival had printed inside them the following message:



Let's make Fort Stockton the most beautiful city in West Texas. Because we are blessed with an abundance of shallow underground water which enable us to furnish you with all the water you need at very low rates. Take advantage of this by planting tree shrubs, flowers and grass or even a vegetable garden on your vacant lots. We extend a cordial welcome to visitors at Water Carnival time and always. (City of Fort Stockton, 1936)

Third, the following quote, printed in early-day Water Carnival programs, illustrates clearly that the characteristics of western hospitality and friendliness were consciously promoted by Water Carnival in order to build the community's image and attract visitors in the area:

Since the early days when community life centered in a cluster of humble dwellings [around] Comanche Springs and the quadrangle of the Old Fort, a cordial welcome has waited the stranger in Fort Stockton and Pecos County, and today that same warm and hearty hospitality of pioneer days is a tradition in our community. With modern innovations and many facilities to serve and entertain you, Fort Stockton still is a place where western hospitality reigns supreme, and in this spirit, we officially bid you welcome to the Water Carnival and to our community. Come again – soon!!

Fourth, the values of cooperation and collective effort were promoted through the Water Carnival by seeking community involvement to help organize the event and contribute to the accomplishment of a collective project. The following was printed in several early Water Carnival programs:

It is the goal of the Fort Stockton Lion's club to enlist support of the entire population of Fort Stockton to the end that Water Carnival may be so outstanding a success that it may become an annual event, bringing wide fame to Fort Stockton as the resort town of the area.

However, in the era that the Water Carnival was conceived there was racial struggle. Ethnic relations were severely polarized and cultural prejudice was prevalent in the public discourse. The Water Carnival was organized by the predominant Euro-American population. Mexican Americans were excluded from even entering the swimming pool. Thus, the above quote, even though referring to the "entire population"

excluded the Mexican American residents. Thus, although the Water Carnival was not designed to address or contest racial inequalities, it later became a symbolic space wherein the Mexican Americans contested their rights as they began their quest for acceptance and social equality. The swimming pool became a symbol as demonstrated by the following historical account:

The integration of the swimming pool and the movie theater stand out as defining moments for the Fort Stockton Mexican American community. Denial of access to these two public arenas stood as large symbols of their second class status and they especially after the experience of World War II, could not let that remain unchallenged. (Flores, 2000; p. 103)

By gaining access to the swimming pool Mexican Americans were able to gradually participate in the Water Carnival. This became the symbolic space for them to celebrate their identity as Americans and their inclusion in the community.

#### **ORGANIZATION AND DESIGN OF WATER CARNIVAL**

The Water Carnival is a local show that is planned, staged and performed exclusively by local people. It is described by locals as water extravaganza, a family affair, a local beauty pageant, a time of reunions, and most of all tradition. The theme and the director of the show are different each year. The show includes synchronized swimming and choreographed dance acts that are performed by local people of different ages in the thematic framework of a musical. There are approximately sixteen water and dance acts per show and each act is distinct in terms of choreography, music and costumes. The themes resemble Hollywood characteristics and make reference to successful films and musicals. The different themes every year help to shape the intended messages as appropriate and enable public discourse around the event. The show is

repeated for three consecutive evenings starting on Thursday with the last performance on Saturday. An event organizer described the event as follows:

We have about twenty different acts. They do dance and swimming. The rehearsals begin about a month prior to the event. The Water Carnival takes place on July 14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> while on July 10<sup>th</sup> on Sunday all the twenty groups come together and they start night rehearsals to put everybody together. That's how the event comes together as a play. They will be in the rehearsal until midnight every night until the day of the Water Carnival. People don't take vacations until after the Water Carnival because this is our big community event. It's a huge community event. We have costumes, we have people who make hundreds of costumes for everybody, everyone wears costumes; and the decorations are very nice, very elaborate, there is nothing cheap about them, everything is very nice and painted by people; so we have a lot of decoration groups working every evening to make all that.

The importance of the show and its all-embracing celebratory character is heightened by ancillary events and festivities. Beauty pageants categorized in divisions based on age precede each night's performance of the show. Thursday night is for the divisions of Tiny-Tot (3 to 4 years old) and Wee Miss (5 to 7 years old) contestants. Friday night is reserved for Sub-Teen (8 to 10 years old), Miss-teen (11 to 13 years old) and Junior Miss contestants (14 to 16 years old). The Miss Fort Stockton (17 to 22 years old) beauty pageant is held Saturday night with the swimsuit and evening gown competition. On Saturday, which is the last day of Water Carnival, a parade is held on the central street of the town. Winners from the previous nights' pageants participate in the parade as well as Miss Fort Stockton contestants. Several individual acts have their own floats and along with several other entries makes it one of the largest parades of the year for the community. Most of the event participants parade along with school reunions that take place during the time of Water Carnival to celebrate local identity. The festivities of Water Carnival reach their conclusion not only with the parade but also with public

gatherings and speeches where community leaders inform the community about emerging issues and recent developments in their town.

The Water Carnival can be characterized as a community driven event that is institutionalized and has its own non-profit designation. The Water Carnival Association is the non-profit entity responsible for the event. The members of the board of directors are elected by the membership of Water Carnival Association to serve as the organizing committee of the event. The Association has about 100 members from all walks of life with local businesses and families to have the most members (Appendix C lists the membership). There are different hierarchical categories of membership, which cost a respective fee, ranging from \$500 for a Golden Membership down to \$10 for an individual membership. From an organizational standpoint, membership in the Water Carnival Association helps to assemble different stakeholders of the community to coordinate the planning and implementation of the event throughout the year. Here lies the basis of collaboration and of building bridges for social networks that support Water Carnival and its operations throughout the year. The Water Carnival Association reflects also the importance and all-embracing character of the event for the community.

The planning of Water Carnival is a year round project. The Water Carnival board of directors, which is the organizing committee of the event, meets on the first Wednesday of every month to plan the show. Each year the board calls for citizens to apply for the job of director by submitting ideas for the following year's theme. The board works its way through the applicants until they agree on a script. The author of the winning script becomes the director of Water Carnival, which in itself is a major honor. Then a contract is drawn up between the board and the director. The contract requires that

there be a set number of scenes involving specific age groups. The directorship is the only paid position. Scripts are accepted in late January.

After the selection of the script, plans begin for the implementation of that year's show. The prop crew is a vital part of Water Carnival. They build all types of props pertaining to the theme of that year's show. Another vital part of the show is the use of glitter and lighting. Because the show takes place at night, it requires plenty of glitter and lights. Also, rehearsals for performing the acts begin about six to eight weeks before the show's scheduled opening time. Practice times are held every day on specific times. Starting on the last Sunday before the Thursday's performance, several rehearsals are held daily until the show's opening.

The Water Carnival is characterized by the participation of families. Over 250 children, teens, and adults actively participate each year in the Water Carnival. Parents and their kids take part in various stages from producing to performing in the show. There are water and dance acts for all ages. This makes Water Carnival a truly family show, which is articulated by everyone involved in the event. Generations of families have participated in Water Carnival. This facilitates the passage of local history, values and identity from one generation to the next. One resident who was involved for years with the event pointed out: "I grew up, I participated in the Water Carnival. My kids grew up here, they all participated. So generations and generations participate in the Water Carnival."

The feeling of civic pride enhances individuality for those who take part in Water Carnival. This is pervasive to everyone involved with Water Carnival and the youth is enculturated into the values promoted by the event. Many kids participate for consecutive years in Water Carnival. One event organizer pointed out:

The biggest change is on young kids. A lot of performers stay in Water Carnival for about a 6-year period and then they either grow up or go away and, then you got the next batch of kids that are coming in for the next six years.

From a functional standpoint, the built in familial character of Water Carnival facilitates communication among the family networks in the community. In a small rural community like Fort Stockton, family networks are important and their participation in a large community event helps frame their relationships. In this context, the socialization of the youth takes place. Also, gender roles are promoted to children, as an example through beauty pageants, which define femininity for young girls. In addition to the local values and tradition, youth is taught lessons like the value of dedication to achieving a common purpose, working as a team, and developing a sense of community pride. An event organizer pointed out:

For the kids it's not just fun and games. They learn a lot from it as far as being able to act. I think that it has the same influence on these people being involved with Water Carnival. I think that if we didn't have the Water Carnival, there would be a lot of things done differently. The Water Carnival has a very positive influence on people and our community.

#### **PATTERNS OF SOCIAL RELATIONS**

The understanding of Water Carnival as a cultural performance requires to be viewed as operating not only within a local system of cultural meanings and community obligations but also within a much wider and more encompassing system of political and economic values, constraints and interests. Fort Stockton, as a U.S. community, reflects aspects of the American way of life, which is modeled in the expressive practices of its events. At the epicenter of events lies the American system of socio-economic organization and its ideals that determine the formation and implementation of events.

As Errington (1990) points out the American way of life is characterized by the free enterprise system functioning in highly competitive markets. In competitive terms, this system shapes the patterns of social relations where inequalities are allowed to exist. It provides the freedom needed for the exercise of choice as well as the competition that motivates options. Through this system of competition, individuals strive to be successful so that they will be perceived as being worthy and as having a valued individuality. However, for such a system to thrive and not end up in self-destruction, because of uncontrolled aggressiveness, it is believed that competition should not produce individualism that leads to aggressively unmitigated displays of self-interest. That would be a source of dissension in the community. This dissension could create crisis and disturbances in the system itself. For this reason, the free enterprise system must be linked with a concern for others. In other words, as competitors, people must be able to stand on their own two feet but as neighbors they should be sociable, obliging and able to work together toward common goals. The principle of neighborliness is projected to create bridges among people who belong to different factions of the community and may have contrasted interests.

The Water Carnival is an example of an event that attempts to symbolize that the community values of neighborliness are linked with the free enterprise values of capitalism. In particular, the volunteer work represents the illustration that the community is brought into existence in such a way that the sacrifice of individuality becomes an enhancement of individuality. The residents of Fort Stockton can regain a sense of individuality on the collective level through their involvement in Water Carnival. As a member of such a remarkable project and supportive community, each member feels special. The fact that the Water Carnival is planned, organized and staged solely by the

efforts of a substantial number of volunteers is overtly a source of considerable local pride. This achievement shows that the energy of individual enterprise can indeed be linked with a sense of civic responsibility. In other words, it denotes that the opposition between individualism and community is not irreconcilable. Volunteers and audience seek to validate themselves and each other in essential ways through their role in the community, through demonstrating their individuality, neighborliness and entrepreneurial success. A volunteer pointed out: "We take it very seriously but we have fun at the same time. We feel proud about our community and ourselves by being part of this event. Nobody is paid. This is all volunteer work." Another volunteer pointed out:

These men and women stay up at the pool until 2 A.M. and later to get everything done. I don't think the public really realizes how much work is involved in the production of the show. All of the volunteers, we make the show what it is.

The entrepreneurial success is symbolized and promoted mainly through beauty pageants. In particular, all contestants in the beauty pageant bear in their sashes the name of a sponsoring local company. This is rather symbolic because there is no financial exchange involved except in some cases the donation of dresses to the contestants. Therefore, this is clearly a way to promote local businesses and illustrate that the community is strongly committed to supporting local businesses. As the mother of one of the pageant contestants shared:

Oh no! The purpose is not at all to get money from the sponsoring business; the purpose is to support the business and have them represented in the pageant. If they want to help with the dress that's great, but it is not expected. Usually you support family or friends that have businesses.

This kind of meta-social commentary reconciles the value of individualism inherent to a capitalist culture with the spirit of collectivism that the Water Carnival promotes. Through the social imaginary of collective effort, a semantic context is created



wherein individualism and collectivism are negotiated and reconciled. Collectivism is promoted through the extensive involvement of volunteers in organizing the event, the group performances and the participation of people of all ages and physical abilities to perform the acts. The issue is not excellence but participation and working hard to be able to perform. Individualism in turn is promoted since the salience of the event for the local community encourages local business owners to have their names printed on the sashes of beauty pageant contestants in order to advertise their individual businesses, serving thus their own agendas. Also, the only competitive element of the Water Carnival that rewards winners is the beauty pageant where individual winners are announced at the end of the show. Therefore, the Water Carnival affirms to locals (and to visitors) that their community is characterized by the harmonious and productive interplay of the values of entrepreneurial competition with those of cooperation, neighborliness and family. The Water Carnival thus stands out as a culmination and representation of their collective efforts. The event conveys the meta-message that collectivity is capable of dealing with the problems of the community and that the community is supportive of individual business and enterprises, which are promoted throughout the event, mainly during the beauty pageants.

Overall, the Water Carnival represents a case in which a local show has become a symbolic space for the cultivation and celebration of local identity. This takes place through the preparation and the staging of the show, which starts about two months before the event. About 500 volunteers participate as cast and staff in staging the various aspects of the show such as performing in the show or working in decorations, sound and lights, promotion, ticketing, etc. Also, many people are being “support personnel” to the cast and staff chauffeuring the children to hours of practice, keeping meals warm, filling

in at work for colleagues who are at rehearsals or building sets and props and generally being encouraging. It is this “space” that brings local people together working for the staging of the event. In turn, local people who do not participate in the event come as attendants to watch and socialize with friends and relatives. The celebratory character of the event extends into the daily life of the community. Some local businesses such as restaurants and banks are decorated and their employees are dressed according to the theme of each year’s show. The celebratory character of the event attracts people from neighboring communities who visit the town during the event. Since the show is repeated for three days it attracts visitation during these days.

In this context, the residents of Fort Stockton address the existential tension of the antithesis between individualism and collectivism in their lives. They develop a sense of community, which is not problematic since it does not cause the loss of individuality that is a major source of self-worth. On the contrary, the integration of individualism and community is accomplished through public group performance by conveying a sense that individuality is enhanced rather than diminished by collective life. Such performances in Water Carnival are reflexive occasions wherein even participants display and reaffirm their particular collective identity. Therefore, the event is a symbolic means for clarifying the patterning and problematics of social relations with resonance to public discourse. It enables the enactment of expressive practices that serve as a metaphor for the maintenance of the community’s social order.

#### **DRAMATURGY IN WATER CARNIVAL**

From an event design perspective, the Water Carnival is a show that blends in a Hollywood-like musical, a sporting recreational activity (synchronized swimming), with

the arts (theater, music and dance) augmented by beauty pageants and a parade. In other words, the Water Carnival stands between sport and the arts encompassing multiple forms of performance that convey an array of associated meanings and eventually create a community driven ritual-like event celebration. Such an event can be described as in-between. Participation and performance in the acts of Water Carnival helps people reproduce and express their own sense of place and their own understandings of who and what they are. Sense of place is closely allied with an understanding of both community and identity (Ryden, 1993). This expression takes place through the metaphoric enactment of choreographed synchronized swimming (i.e., reference to the water as the fundamental element of local tradition) and dance acts (i.e., reference to the community's creativity and capacity to stage local shows).

Fundamentally, the Water Carnival serves to convey meaning to the flux of social life. It provides a way to define and interpret social structures within and outside the event context. Through the presentation of sets of meanings the community is able to construct a symbolic world in which personal experiences can be linked to goals, motives and concepts shared by the event participants and in turn they can be formulated into a coherent world view that may then serve to enroll the community into accepting those structures. In Water Carnival, relationships of trust, cooperation and friendship are maintained through the staging and preparation of the event throughout the year by the volunteers. An event participant pointed out: "It makes family members out of non-family members. We get friendships through working together and become closer friends almost like a family."

In this regard, the Water Carnival encourages cooperation and generalized reciprocity within social networks. The event can be seen as a mechanism of social

cohesion: the community consolidates itself socially and morally by the very act of working together in the project. An event participant pointed out:

Ever since I started being involved with Water Carnival about 15 years ago, it just seems to be something I wanna be involved in every single year and probably will for years to come. I want my kids involved, my husband is also on the board, so it is just something that our family does together all summer long.

Through the preparation of staging the show, people redefine the place of each other in the social system. The event helps build relationships in the social structure of the community that families have the central role. The local organizers assign to everyone involved responsibilities, which bind them to a common task. This includes the preservation of their tradition by passing it upon the next generation and thus reaffirming the loyalty to each other and of children and parents. The social integration is resuscitated in the phases of staging the show. As a resident pointed out:

[The Water Carnival] brings together people of different interest and with different cultures. It gives them a specific project to work on and builds camaraderie, it builds spirit for the community, it's a good positive impact on our community. And to be in the Water Carnival there is no age limit, they have kids as young as four and five and six years old and adults as old as seventy and eighty years old.

In the symbolic space of the event, community identity is enacted at a referential level in which local people engage in a celebration. They mobilize notions of tradition and history, theater and swimming to enact a community with resonance in their local context. The social imaginary is constructed not through striving for exemplary performance (athletic or artistic) but at a second level of abstraction through referential performance by local people who perform moderately synchronized swimming and dance acts or imitate in a carnival-like atmosphere famous professional performers (i.e., movie stars or singers). An event participant made the following observation regarding the nature of performance in synchronized swimming:

I think about our Water Carnival during every summer Olympics. When they have the swimming and the synchronized swimmers and all of that. And I look at that on TV and I say: You know we have six and seven and eight years old kids doing not the same thing but similar. And I look at that and I think. It's kinda neat to be able to watch something in the Olympics and you got some six, seven, eight years old kids that are emulating what they see in the Olympics. Not the same and none of them will ever get to the Olympics but it gives them a sense of pride to be able and tell their friends "I can do something like that."

These meta-performances (performances about performance) are facilitated by the satiric and liberated character that the concept of carnival entails. It must be noted that the concept of carnival is used in the context of a show. It is not a carnival in the conventional sense like New Orleans's Mardi Gras. It is blended with sport and the arts and it is described as a show by local people. The critical aspect is that local people of all ages and abilities are able to participate and perform. Almost all acts are performed in groups and aim to denote the spirit of collaboration in the community. As most local people declare, Fort Stockton is blessed because all people work together. The Water Carnival is the occasion that demonstrates this belief for local people and affirms their desired image (i.e. as a vibrant town) to the neighboring communities.

The carnival element of the event is a metaphor serving to create a comical caricature of the American lifestyle and a joyous fantasy that links local identity to Hollywood and consequently to the material wealth and glamour of a capitalist, consumer oriented economy. An event participant pointed out:

Water Carnival is something that is more about fantasy, it is not real. For example, the wall that we painted was meant to resemble all the stores that were in the main street in the 50s and not specifically what the stores actually looked like. So it was made up. But it really helps creating the context of how things were back then.

The event is a "carnavalesque" rendition of the semantic context wherein local culture is conceived, institutionalized and transacted. Through this celebration Fort

Stockton dramatizes and indeed defines and discovers a fundamental aspect of its social order, which makes Water Carnival a reflection and a functional appendage of social life. To understand this process we must examine more closely the metaphoric meanings of the different event elements.

In this respect, the Water Carnival features meta-performative enactment that amalgamates the different event elements. It also presents an ambiguity in terms of defining the standards for good or bad performance, or sacrificing the individuality for collectivity. This illustrates a continuous negotiation between the symbolic ways that local people strive to give meaning to their lives and the conventional values of capitalism. Thus, children who perform are socialized into the values that the show conveys (i.e., co-operation, pride, hard-work, etc.). However, the value of individuals is not recognized when performing synchronized swimming or dance acts. The focus is on the group performance. Similarly, there is no evaluation of the performance of the cast members underlining the collective effort. Yet, the beauty pageants socialize female children from their early childhood into the values of conventional femininity and individuality. These oscillations in meta-performance between the symbolic and the normal have a special salience and efficacy for the enactment of the local show and its resonance in local discourse.

In essence, the Water Carnival is an eclectic assemblage of elements associated with a search for local tradition. There are icons from how life was in the past in the decorations and symbols used in the show. For example, the theme of the 2006 show was “A Walk to Remember” reviving how life was in the community in 1950-1960s. Nostalgia for the past exemplified a homogenous image that connoted local tradition. The Water Carnival, hence, conveys a coherent image and a common historical reference that

all the community can instantiate giving the impression that it has always been a part of the Fort Stockton's life. Since the first time it was conceived and organized (in 1936), the community regards the Water Carnival as an entrenched local tradition. The grounds of the event's status can be summarized as follows:

First, the Water Carnival conveys local history. The aura of the past has been incorporated into the event through the decorations that are crafted by volunteers (e.g., an image of main street during the 50-60s, dressing and music from the 60s). In addition, the event takes place in the swimming pool that is named Comanche Springs commemorating the historic springs that, in essence, gave birth to the town. A symbolic component of history is reflected throughout the scripted scenes; for example by referring to sports like football or softball and their importance for local life. The use of the past, albeit selective, gives Water Carnival the same sense of permanence and stability that longer traditions have. Another element of permanency is each year's program where there is a hall of fame section listing the themes, directors and winners of the Miss Fort Stockton Pageant since 1936. Also, the Annie Riggs museum has a space dedicated to Water Carnival exhibits illustrating that it is part of the local history.

Second, the Water Carnival appears to be diachronically stable because many people are committed to making it endure since it was instituted in 1936. The community also mobilizes the prison system in the area and inmates offer their labor during event preparation. A special brochure is published with the show's program that has all the information about that year's production and the history of the event. This is distributed to all hotels and restaurants in town so that visitors can be enticed to attend the event. As mentioned before, some local businesses embrace the theme of the Water Carnival. For example, in 2006 a local bank was all decorated in a 60's theme. A juke box playing

Elvis Presley's music was visibly positioned at the lobby, iconic cars from the 60's were parked in front of the bank and employees all dressed the part, hence embracing the sense of celebration that Water Carnival conveys.

Third, the parade culminates the Water Carnival and takes place on Saturday, the last day of the event on the main street of Fort Stockton. The parade seeks to assemble both the past and present of the town (e.g., in 2006 class reunions from the 1950s through the 2000s paraded). Also, the parade projects the collective spirit of the community and values of individualism through the promotion of local companies. Cars that constitute the parade bear the logos of local companies. In this grand parade the townspeople state symbolically what the collectivity believes in and wants itself to be. In that moment, as a collectivity, they ask and answer the following questions:

- Who we are? As an event organizer pointed out: "A small rural community in West Texas that continues the tradition of pioneer days."
- How do we feel about ourselves? As an event volunteer pointed out: "We are a strong community and feel proud of our achievements."
- Why are we what we are? As a local official pointed out: "Because we know as a community how to work together."

As Handelman (1990) pointed out, through events, a culture has the capacity to conserve and to process information about itself. Therefore, events are culturally constituted foci of information processing. In this sense, the Water Carnival is a summarized pronouncement and manifestation of what is known, through which local people celebrate and parade their identity. Most importantly, it is an occasion for the intensification of what social order knows itself to be and for the validation of this knowledge. It attempts to display social order as understood by its creators. It does this



mainly through images that mirror the collective and/or elite perceptions of what the mindsets and the feelings of participants ought to be.

### **REFLEXIVITY IN WATER CARNIVAL**

The symbolic meanings that are extracted through dramaturgical elements of Water Carnival reflect and help to construct shared values that stabilize its social order. The presentation of social conditions that the event mirrors requires reflexivity by the actors in terms of a constitutive consciousness that acknowledges the existing nature and state of the community's life. Yet, the event may help impose meanings to the community that do not reflect inherent contradictions or evolving tensions. This is mainly because the symbolic meanings are created by those who volunteer and are involved with the event, while during the enactment of the show the audience is mainly passive.

The scope of dramaturgical production embracing merely the volunteers is something that could be problematic or desirable depending on the perspective from which it is viewed. For example, McAloon (1984), in his discussion of the Olympic Games, supported the liberating character of spectacle for audiences because it conveys the message "all you have to do is watch" which in turn may involve audiences to more active behaviors that they did not consider at first hand. This seems to be true for grand spectacles; yet, the case of Water Carnival, which is a dramatized staged show, entails a resonance to the social context of a small rural community. Normally, it would be expected that more active roles for the people of the whole community could have been engendered and not the passivity of the audience to be embraced. The extent to which dramaturgical meanings in Water Carnival can engender collective action seems to be a

matter of the actors' involvement in a series of event procedures and the reaction of the audience to the final performance.

Furthermore, performances like Water Carnival should be analyzed not only as defining a community's sense of itself but also a community's understanding of its position in a broader socio-political context, which define the boundaries between insiders and outsiders. In particular, a problem is that the social networks created through Water Carnival may have excluding properties. This was experienced by the author to some extent when attempting to get involved with the event at short notice. The attempts were met with some resistance by event organizers. Their main concern seems to be around uncovering negative back-stage information and its dissemination. The fact that the author was perceived as a temporary local may have significantly contributed to their response. The last day rehearsals also were closed to the public making it impossible for the author to attend them. This may indicate a concern of event organizers to protect the event from any unknown factors. It is also indicative of some mistrust of local people towards outsiders.

Another more complex and implicit problem is that the resolution of the contradiction between individualism and community, which is experienced at the local level, may serve to obscure and perpetuate other contradictions concerning the nature and state of Fort Stockton's community. For example, by defining their collective identity in terms of unity and equality, the community may misread the causes and effects of their own racially divided past that may still maintain discriminatory patterns. The reference to the past's racial tensions tends to be avoided through the event, and hence, the opportunities for reflection on those preceding problems are minimal. Also, the Water Carnival features only mainstream American themes and cultural elements and there is no

effort to include components of Hispanic tradition in the program. Although the majority of people who are involved with the event are Hispanics, it seems that they perceive this as an opportunity to celebrate and parade their American identity. In this regard, the Water Carnival is not an event that encourages reflexivity on the issue of cultural integration of Hispanic and mainstream American components. The community declares that is ethnically united but its seminal and defining event does not include Hispanic elements and hence the avenues for such an integration remain unexplored in this specific context. Therefore, to accurately interpret Water Carnival, it is necessary to focus not only on the reflexivity that it encourages but also on the reflexivity that it precludes.

This seems to be associated with the symbolic structure of the event that is intended to present selective versions of Fort Stockton's social order, those that are deemed as desirable for the maintenance and development of the community. In this regard, the event mirrors the predominant value system, socio-economic and political arrangements as well as a historical reference that characterize the community. It is rather a metaphoric proclamation about the components that the community is built upon and it seeks validation by the community members. While this end is attained through the kind of dramaturgical meanings that are extracted, these meanings inhibit liminality because are antithetical with it. This means that Water Carnival does not seek to break down social distinctions, status roles or political and other hierarchies, or to make alternative models. It does not seek to suspend social conventions and rules since event participants are not stripped of their antecedent status and do not acquire one to which the categories and classifications of their socio-cultural state have ceased to apply. Thus, there is minimal opportunity for taboos to be lifted, daily reality to be suspended, roles to be denounced, and structures to be altered in the time and space of Water Carnival. On the

contrary, such manifestations would be viewed as unsafe, problematic and potentially destructive for the community; a community that, perhaps due to its economically stressed status, seeks to maintain and reaffirm the rules, hierarchies and social conventions that ensure its survival.

In particular, the status and hierarchies are reflected primarily through the membership of Water Carnival Association, which maintains different hierarchical membership levels (with differentiated financial dues). On this basis, prominent businesses, families and individuals maintain and demonstrate their social status, shaping at the same time the character of the event through the election of the board of directors. The board of directors sets the rules that permeate the staging and performance of the event. In this context, the beauty pageants that precede the performance of the show exemplify the social convention of femininity as a norm of behavior. Moreover, the crowning of winners creates individual statuses and the conventional rules that surround the beauty pageant become often a source of dissension. For example, the following complaint was published in the local newspaper:

My five year old daughter was in the Wee Miss Pageant. I was upset due to the rules that the pageant had. As a responsible parent I took my daughter to all practices and everything else we needed to attend, and here comes several other mothers with their daughters' to the last practice and picture day. As the rest of the mothers' and daughters' that had been there from the beginning, I felt that it was not FAIR to any of those who had been there from the beginning. [...] I strongly feel that the Water Carnival should better use rules and regulations and not turn around and blame someone for their wrong doings. [...] BE HONEST AND FAIR. (*Fort Stockton Pioneer*, August 10, 2007)

The nature of beauty pageants epitomizes the expression and perpetuation of feminine stereotypes and rules that surround the contest. The choice of the community to include beauty pageants reflects the intent to maintain and project conventional values that stabilize the community's social order. In the same regard, the staging and enactment

of the show follows the social conventions of a Hollywood-type extravaganza implicitly seeking to homogenize a group of people around a self-proclaimed identity but precluding undesirable reflexivity, which can reveal individual differences and inequalities. This is critical for the proclaimed ethnic integration. The community achieves to consolidate itself as a collectivity but this integration takes place in Americanization context and terms. The celebration of American identity for Hispanic people is an affirmation of their role in the community and equal integration with Anglos. Thus, the event avoids both historical reflection of the past's racial tensions and inclusion of Hispanic elements in the program, therefore, consolidating the community primarily through the enactment and celebration of mainstream American themes and ideals. The extent to which this is a source of racial and class inequalities in the context of a capitalist culture (Foley, 1990a) needs further analysis, which is out of the scope of this study. What must be pointed out, however, is that the logic of conventional Americanization that permeates the thematic content of the shows is maintained, inhibiting the cultivation of liminality and the suspension of hegemonic discourse. In other words, it is suffice to say that Water Carnival achieves to create a sense of instrumental solidarity by bringing the community together based on the common symbolic references that the event provides (i.e., history, collective work and identity), which is critical for the reconciliation of tensions and the survival of the community. Yet, the lack of liminality hinders the development of a privileged space wherein event participants can be reflexive appraising the terms and conditions that shape their relationships and lives as well as the community at large.

Overall, the Water Carnival is embedded in cultural patterns that imbue its design and implementation with an array of symbolisms, rules and social conventions. These

enable individuals and groups of the community to act upon or to relate to themselves by publicly enunciating feelings of statehood, nationhood and civic collectivity. The presentation of ideal patterns of social life is exemplified by axiomatic symbolisms and metaphoric discourse that deals with substantiating the affirmation of the community's social order. In this context, the factors of predominant social order are not sought to be deconstructed and recombined; subsequently, liminality is antithetical to the Water Carnival's intent and dramaturgical meanings.

### **OUTCOMES OF WATER CARNIVAL**

From an event planning standpoint, the Water Carnival represents a case wherein the social and economic purposes coexist. The context of symbolism that heightens a celebratory atmosphere and enhances the seminal character of Water Carnival for the community enables Fort Stockton to utilize the event for achieving both economic and social benefits. Economic outcomes entail visitation that engenders spending in local hotels and restaurants through visitors from neighboring communities or old Fort Stockton residents who migrated and take this opportunity to visit family and friends and attend the event. Social outcomes entail primarily a sense of community togetherness, parading of local identity, and ultimately creation and enhancement of social capital.

Local people mention the large scale of production and the all-embracing character of Water Carnival for the community. A resident pointed out:

The things that make us happy with this event are: number one is that it's the biggest show in the summer, number two everybody in Fort Stockton loves Water Carnival, they either are in the show or they go to see the show. They set the class reunions around the dates of the show. Many family members choose that time to come and visit.

Despite the attainment of a range of economic and social ends, Fort Stockton does not appear to employ strategic planning for leveraging the event. Rather the planning of Water Carnival is embedded in patterns of social relations and tight-knit social networks, political arrangements as well as long-established practices that characterize the community. These parameters are the driving forces that shape the implementation of the event in the absence of a joint strategy to cross-leverage Water Carnival with other events in the portfolio or set tactics for the magnification of economic and social ends. The seminal role of the event for the community and its emphasis on event tourism guide primarily the planning decisions.

In this regard, the brochure of Water Carnival's program, which has all the information about that year's production and the history of the event, is distributed to all hotels and restaurants in town so that visitors can be enticed to attend the event. Also, the Annie Riggs museum has an exhibit dedicated to Water Carnival, which connects a tourism attraction of the community with the event. This is part of the CVB's effort to utilize Water Carnival as a community asset and integrate it with its tourism product mix. However, there are no explicit tactics employed for the economic leverage of the event, especially to foster visitor spending and lengthen visitor stays nor is the event used consistently in advertising, which constitutes a lost opportunity to build and strengthen the community's image.

In terms of community development, the Water Carnival presents more comprehensive but ad hoc efforts that intent primarily to integrate the community. In the absence of a strategic approach, a number of intuitive practices are followed, which over the years shaped successfully the planning of Water Carnival deriving desirable outcomes. In particular, ancillary events and activities are organized. The school reunions

that are scheduled during the Water Carnival foster sociability and reconnection of the community. Also, public meetings and talks about the town's developments serve as social gathering points and the parade amplifies a sense of celebration. Theming is employed in Water Carnival with some local businesses (primarily those who are members of Water Carnival Association) embracing entirely the theme of Water Carnival. This extends the celebratory character of the event into the daily life of the community. Also, the whole community is invited to participate in the parade and embrace the theme of the show by entering a float in the parade. Finally, event publicity for Water Carnival uses narratives to portray the desired of the community as a small but strong and friendly town, which builds the identity of the community. However, the lack of liminality hinders the possibility to leverage the event for meaningful community development in terms of promoting civic engagement, developing thick trust and diminishing inequalities.

Undoubtedly, there is a fertile ground for a strategic approach to be employed in the planning of Water Carnival, especially in the context of the portfolio and synergizing economic and social leverage. Although the entire potential of Water Carnival for leverage remains unrealized, Fort Stockton attains the range of intended outcomes, which could be magnified and sustained through the employment of an explicit strategic planning approach. The hitherto attained outcomes are summarized as follows:

### **Community Solidarity**

As many local people declare, nothing defines Fort Stockton better than the Water Carnival. It is a seminal and defining moment for local people. An event such as the Water Carnival is viewed as more than a celebration. It is the bringing together of hundreds of local residents, for hundreds of hours, to produce something meaningful that



will be remembered in the future. The following quote printed in the local newspaper exemplifies the feeling of community togetherness that is promoted in Water Carnival:

[...] There is no agenda, just three evenings of fun. Each person is like a small drop of rain, joining another drop until you have a pool, then a spring, and finally a river to the ocean. That is the success of the Water Carnival. The joining together of all those individual drops of talent into a pool of success. (*Fort Stockton Pioneer*, July 20, 2006)

One resident pointed out:

Water Carnival started in 1936, which says to the community that we have had this show for seventy years. It brings the community together because the show cannot be put on without community support, community help, community participation, membership money, everything comes from the community. Therefore, to have a show for seventy years says a lot about our community.

### **Sense of Communal Accomplishment**

The fact that Water Carnival is a product of collective endeavor, a project that reflects the capacity of the community to create and maintain something meaningful on its own, based on volunteer work, derives a considerable sense of civic pride. An event organizer pointed out:

The accomplishment of being able to put on the show from the very start, when you start with nothing but a script and you work things up, in all little details, all the props working right, all the lights working right, all the music working right and then when show-time comes along and you got 1,500 people out in the stands, it makes you feel excited. And then when they come afterwards to congratulate you on what a fine show it was, we know it's all worth it, all the hard work is worth it when people smile at you.

Similarly, the local newspaper wrote:

They put on a show 54 times pausing only for lack of water, pool repair and a world war. The Water Carnival however, is more than a show, though that would certainly be enough. The Water Carnival is a creation of the community. Everyday people taking many hours from their busy schedules to write, act, sing, dance, swim, make costumes, paint scenery and sell tickets. It takes every person from the spot light operator to the master of ceremonies to make the show a success. And in 2006 it was a success. Not because of the large crowds, but because everyone involved

gives something of themselves to a community project. When you have that many people coming together to do anything of value, monetary success is nothing, the project is everything. (*Fort Stockton Pioneer*, July 20, 2006)

### **Community Identity**

The sense of communal accomplishment is closely associated with the community identity. The Water Carnival is an example of a kind of cultural performance in which residents stage and perform their own local show for an audience that includes a large number of people much like themselves. The didactic burden of Water Carnival is carried not only by the specific representation performed on the stage but also by the context, by its very celebration. In this vision Fort Stockton is united through an undifferentiated group of people watching the performance of a local show. An event participant said:

What I like in Water Carnival is the effort we all do together to stage a show with hundreds of people involved, featuring synchronized swimmers and several dance acts that follow a theatrical plot. This kind of show is a product of the whole community. It says to the world who we are and what we can achieve when working together. And I think this is something you don't find in many communities and this is what makes us a strong community; the ability to work together and produce something unique.

As local people state, the Water Carnival is one of the institutions that make Fort Stockton unique. This kind of distinctiveness is sought by the community in order to define its position in the local area and the world at large. To point out their distinctiveness as a community in Texas, Fort Stockton encompasses something more than the West Texas identity and the spirit of pioneer days that is reflected at some extent through Water Carnival. Fort Stockton seeks to be identified as a "unique place," a strong community that embodies the practices of collective action despite the innate problems of a rural isolated town and factional interests. The staging of the event illustrates their use of identity. As such, it is intended to be perceived by outsiders. The following quote printed in the local newspaper presents the experience of a visitor:

I had heard of Water Carnival before, but never really understood it until I visited the Comanche Springs Swimming Pool. I was truly amazed Thursday and Friday at the sheer size of the spectacle. I have no idea how it stacks up against years past, but either way, I was very impressed. I had never seen anything like it. In any case, it's always great to see a community support the achievements of its own, and that's what I really saw this weekend. From the oohs and ahs of the pageants to the large crowds both nights I attended, it was clear that Fort Stockton does a great job of supporting its own. All told, everyone involved should be extremely proud of their final product. They all did a fantastic job, from the prop crew to the lighting folks to the kids of all ages in the acts. (*Fort Stockton Pioneer*, July 21, 2005)

The choice of event elements reflects also the American and West Texas identity of Fort Stockton in connection with a collective model of participation and performance. The following description in the local newspaper illustrates these elements:

There is modern rock right down to old country songs. Most of the acts feature couples of varying ages in a water act. Typically, couples' acts have been limited to high school age and above. We wanted people of all ages to get a chance to participate in this fun type of act. There has been done a fabulous job incorporating choreography for all ages and abilities. (*Fort Stockton Pioneer*, July 14, 2005)

### **Economic Benefit**

The major economic benefit that derives from Water Carnival is through the return of old Fort Stockton residents who migrated. Their visit back to Fort Stockton constitutes a form of tourism, which is known as the visiting friends and relatives travel (Braunlich & Nadkarni, 1995; Moscardo, Pearce, Morrison, Green, & O'Leary, 2000; Seaton & Palmer, 1997). For this reason, school reunions are scheduled during Water Carnival and participate in the parade. Thus, the event is the occasion where old friends and relatives meet renewing their social connections and in turn the celebratory context of the event presents opportunities for money to be spent in Fort Stockton. As one resident pointed out: "[In the school reunions] most of us want to renew friendships and

relive memories. It's a fuss that brings people back to Fort Stockton; and we do it because it's fun.”

Local residents perceive Water Carnival as presenting an economic opportunity for their community as demonstrated by a local resident:

The high school reunions are held every time in conjunction with the Water Carnival. So that brings people into town. People who grew up here and haven't been here for 10, 20, 30, 40, 50 years and it brings them back to the town where they were raised and they get to visit with their friends from back then. And of course, the other side of that, is that it brings money back into the community. I've always been told that every dollar that comes in, turns over 8 times before it ever leaves. So if you bring \$1 and it turns over 8 times, that \$1 is equivalent to \$8. Multiply that one times 100, or 1,000, and you know how many dollars you bring into the community.

Furthermore, the celebratory atmosphere also attracts visitors who help fill up the motels and restaurants during the weekend that the event takes place. Tourism in Fort Stockton strives to take advantage of its location as a passing point between destinations. One resident pointed out:

Tourism is a big part of our community and one of the reasons is that because we are located on the Interstate, halfway between El Paso and San Antonio. We're not really a destination but we are a stop. Water Carnival is a great reason to stop, even if just for one evening. We just need to make travelers aware so they can take advantage of it.

### **Community Reconnection**

The school reunions also derive an overt social value for Fort Stockton. They reconnect families and old friends and revitalize the social networks in the community. As one resident pointed out: “When you have people coming back to the town where they grew up, then they get together and reconnect with the community, many re-establish old friendships and stay connected.”

Dinners and meetings focusing on the town's developments are organized to facilitate and encourage the reconnection process. This has been described in the

literature as helping reconnect social networks at-a-distance (Mason, 2004; Urry, 2003). Nostalgia prompted through school reunions is a substantial means of reconnecting old residents and reviving collective images of the past. One respondent explained:

We look back at our High School days, who we were, how the town was back then and what we have become now. We feel proud that we grew up in this town and although we live far away, we see that the spirit of the old days is still alive, the town is still alive and well and we say “hey, we were all in this together and we still are.”

The participation of the school reunions in the Water Carnival’s parade serves as a symbolic pronouncement about the town’s ability to integrate the past and the present.

As one respondent pointed out:

I think people are concerned that many of today's students won't stay in the area and this will eventually put an end to Water Carnival. So having the school reunions during the event and taking part in the parade it's like trying to hold a family together. Could it end? No.

Along the same lines, another respondent emphasized that the school reunions bolster the support of previous residents to the community:

For some, the high school reunion serves as a venue for showing off. For others it is a chance to remember the old days and tease each other. But the commonality is that we are here in the town that we grew up in. We are here again and we want to help the town any way we can and that is the important part.

### **Sport Development**

A final implicit outcome of Water Carnival is the promotion of physical activity through the event performances. As local people state, a benefit of Water Carnival is that it stimulates interest for the water sports. In particular, an event participant pointed out: “Water Carnival is a great occasion for the development of water sports in the community. It is drawing in people and develops interest into the sport.” Another participant explained:

[The synchronized swimming acts in Water Carnival] is a fantastic exercise, great for the posture. Some kids came out strong swimmers. Over time kids develop skill, flexibility, strength and endurance that allow them to move through the water with ease, confidence and grace. For us [adults] things are harder and we keep it cool.

The event requires individuals to practice their acts for several months in a row, which for some people is the main physical activity that they do during the year. Also, the socialization of the children performing in water acts along with their parents or older people promotes a sporting activity as a way of living and not necessarily as a competitive activity. While this is not sport development per se, it contributes to the development of “sport for all” providing an opportunity for alternative physical activity in parallel from the predominant sports in the community.

#### **CONCLUDING REMARKS**

Water Carnival is a community celebration that presents a staged show augmented by associated festivities. Sport features as an activity within them. Hence, cultural performances and sport have a seminal role in Fort Stockton and their position is critical within the event portfolio. Their popularity and appeal to a wide range of audiences makes them appropriate vehicles for the expression of values that a community may have. They are not mere entertainment. They can contribute to identity formation or strengthen the social fabric through the massive engagement and participation of people. It is also important how sport and cultural performances are blended to produce an in-between event such as Water Carnival. The nature of this staged show seems to be able to embrace genres creating a symbolic social space, which has the possibility of reassembling the value system of the community.

The staged show of Water Carnival dramatizes and brings together a fundamental ideological conflict between cooperation and competition, individualism and collectivism, social benefit and economic interest. The creation of dramaturgical metaphors and associated meanings in the event help to negotiate and reconcile the above antithetical attitudes. In this regard, what participants in Water Carnival do, is rehearsing a role conceived to be part of a panoply of such roles, all adapted to presentation in sport and cultural performances.

The roles that the event participants rehearse and perform, presented as suitable for spectation, is a self-conscious effort to construct a plural collective identity through the concurrent use of key cultural elements to epitomize an implied whole. That is perhaps why Fort Stockton has chosen a staged show as a means of representing itself in the seminal community celebration. The extent to which this is a case of top-down pluralism wherein the economic and political elites aim to inculcate in groups of the community, the values of cooperation and competition as suitable for spectation is not clear. What is clear, however, is that a value system is created and promoted through Water Carnival's preparation and participation in its associated festivities, performance in the show, and spectatorship of audiences.

## **Chapter 6: Event Interrelationships**

An event portfolio can be viewed as a series of cultural performances, a sequence of dramatic stories in which people proclaim and demonstrate their sense of who they are. The different genres and event types may illustrate multiple versions and interpretations of the social context of a community. Yet, at the same time different events may complement and reinforce meanings via symbiotic theming based on conceptual continuity and a common internal logic that permeates the symbolic use of event elements. In terms of event planning, it is critically important to cultivate thematic or conceptual continuities among events in a portfolio. For example, the use of events for achieving social purposes may employ continuities to nurture an integral “sacredness” connected by symbolic meanings among different events that will foster social interaction and a heightened sense of celebration to all the events of the portfolio. For event and tourism marketing, continuities among different events may facilitate the development of theming synergies among different events and strengthen the consistency of their messages, thereby building the desired image of a destination.

It is, therefore, important to understand and analyze events in relationship to one another in order to find the ways to develop synergies among them. Such an analysis can provide the foundation for understanding what shapes event relatedness and the planning and implementation of the event portfolio by discerning the characteristics of events and the factors that influence their organization. For this reason, Fort Stockton’s major events are analyzed in this chapter with the purpose of explicating the interrelationships among them. In this analysis, Water Carnival, which was examined in the previous chapter, serves as a defining frame of reference and comparison with other events in the portfolio.



## **SPORT AND HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL**

Fort Stockton hosts a plethora of sport events that are organized mainly by the High School and the Recreation Department. For the purpose of this analysis, High School Football (which is a collection of home and away games) is defined as a recurring event of the home games. It seems that High School Football is complementary with Water Carnival insomuch as they share common elements (i.e., sport, music and dancing). Both events, despite their differences tend to reinforce each other's role and the meta-messages that they convey. Sport lies at the core of both events but being staged differently; competitive in High School Football and as a recreational physical activity in Water Carnival. For this reason, in order to understand the parallels between these two seminal events the contribution of sport in the community must be considered.

In rural Fort Stockton, sport is a significant factor that mobilizes people's labor, resources and attentions. The use of sports in the service of local identity provides a discursive framework for the promotion of particular identifications. Fort Stockton's engagements with sports are shaped in a world of excitement, competition, and fundraising. The School is central to the importance of sports in the social life of Fort Stockton. It is through schools' sport teams that Fort Stockton engages with neighboring communities. As one resident pointed out: "School sports give us something common as a community, the whole town is represented by them, they sum up Fort Stockton." Also, the importance of sport in providing a forum for the formation and maintenance of social networks is evident in Fort Stockton. Local people who are involved in sport engage in social interaction. For example, one resident pointed out: "A great benefit of sports in our community is that they bring us all together in the games and we get to know each other." Another respondent emphasized the importance of sports for the family networks: "When

there's a football, softball or volleyball game [by the High School teams], it's like a family celebration. We'll all get together and socialize supporting our kids who make us proud."

Sport creates a sense of local pride, community spirit and integration that forms the basis of a tight-knit community. This is particularly evident when local teams play against those from other communities. Competition between teams is generally seen as synonymous with competition between communities. It seems that Fort Stockton uses sport to present an alternative vision of local culture as something that is best realized when it is seen, and is thus preparing the youth for membership in the community. A resident pointed out: "Sports is a way to build character in people and also it is a way to bring the community together. And sports is a way to teach kids teamwork." Another respondent pointed out about the sport programs and events that the High School organizes:

The programs at the high school affect not only the team members but everyone they come in contact with, locally or at tournaments statewide. So this tournament too is an important factor in building character in addition to playing the game with courtesy and respect.

Sport is also important in Fort Stockton in terms of ethnic relations. Sport has facilitated the integration of Hispanic population into the community. For example, since the period of racial struggle and discrimination (1930-1940), baseball in Fort Stockton, as a recreational activity, presented an opportunity to make a statement. Baseball served as a metaphor for Mexicanos and their relationship to the Euro-American community. The game of baseball, like Mexicano life in Fort Stockton, was subject to skill and timing, and recognition of skill dependent on the benevolence of the powerful. In Fort Stockton, baseball secured attention and, briefly, the Mexican baseball team enjoyed support from both communities (Flores, 2000). Similarly, football in Fort Stockton serves as the

occasion for Hispanic youth to demonstrate their American identity and adherence to the values of hard work, team-work and aggressive competitiveness.

In examining the High School Football events in Fort Stockton the first observation that arises is that the football matches serve as a social stage for bringing the community together and enacting their community identity versus a team of another community. As one resident pointed out: “These kids [football players] don’t play for themselves, they play for the whole community. They know that they are a mirror of Fort Stockton and [that they] show our spirit.” Another resident added: “This might create pressure to them [football players] but when they play bad, it’s like the whole community is going bad. We all support them and this gets everybody together, so when they play good this shows that we are a strong community.” Another resident pointed out: “During the [football] season, the whole town is ‘playing’ football one way or another if you know what I mean. It’s very important to the community and we all care about it.”

High School Football activates the community as the momentous occasion of assembling students’ labor, and high school resources as suitable for spectatorship. Through the performance of the students the community sees itself and strives to consolidate a vision for the future. The use of football in the service of local identity provides a discursive prototype for the promotion of Texan values. From an event portfolio standpoint, it is particularly interesting how High School Football events are interrelated with Water Carnival. These two events constitute the epicenter of Fort Stockton’s event portfolio. For this reason, similarities and differences between High School Football and Water Carnival need to be examined. Accordingly, Table 6.1 provides a summary of the similarities and differences between High School Football (HSF) and Water Carnival (WC):

**Table 6.1: Similarities & Differences between Water Carnival-High School Football**

<b>Similarities</b>	<b>Differences</b>
Team effort in HSF/group performance in WC	Competition in HSF
Socialization of the youth/gender roles	Cooperation in WC
Music/dancing	Active audience in HSF
Family events	Passive audience in WC
Sponsorship/promotion of local businesses	Excellent performance in HSF
Community image/identity	Excellence not sought in WC
Meta-messages (pride, potency, vivacity)	Recurring frequency in HSF
Ethnic integration	Once a year frequency in WC

Both football (representing the competitive sports) and Water Carnival (representing cultural performances) are about local collectivity having teams or groups that represent them in a social universe where analogous units engage with one another. Both sports and cultural performances homogenize the forms of identity that get manifested in public life. In this regard, gender roles are strengthened and promoted through both events. In High School Football, boys are encouraged to be masculine as tough players while girls to be feminine as cheerleaders. Similarly, in Water Carnival girls are encouraged to be feminine through the beauty pageants. Femininity is paraded and awarded in the context of a community celebration. Also, socialization of the youth takes place in both events through the involvement of children in arduous preparation for performing in the events. The family character is evident in High School Football and Water Carnival. Families attend both events and in many cases are involved with the staging of the events. Liminality is not sought in either event since they seek to project and bolster social conventions and norms that build the community. In general, the role of High School Football as a means of sustaining capitalist culture and reproducing its associated inequalities has been demonstrated in the literature (i.e., Foley, 1990a, 1990b).

As entertainment, both events encompass music and dancing to amplify their aesthetic appeal and celebratory character to audiences. High School Football features the

performance of the high school band and dancing from cheerleaders that entertain spectators and encourage the efforts of the players. A whole choreographed performance takes place in the intermission of matches. In Water Carnival, music and dancing are necessary elements that comprise the structure of the show. Choreographed dance and water acts are accompanied by music and songs. The staging of sport and cultural performance is structured, expressed or accompanied by music and dancing. While the artistic value of such performances may be questionable, their social value for enabling a heightened sense of celebration in these events is essential. From this point of view, it seems that vernacular elements of the arts can be combined and complement sport events when they are relevant to the character of an event.

Salient similarities between Water Carnival and High School Football can also be identified through the meta-messages they both convey. The desired image of the community as a strong, vibrant town is affirmed and projected. Integration of Hispanic and Anglo portions of the population has been achieved through the participation of both ethnic groups in the events. The self-proclaimed distinctiveness of Fort Stockton is demonstrated through the achievements of the football team and the capacity of the community to stage an extravagant show. Community solidarity and support for the football team and Water Carnival are exemplified also by local businesses' sponsorship of these events. Therefore, it seems that both events, as part of Fort Stockton's event portfolio, complement each other and reinforce the claims of the other. Each tells the town's story and presents in symbolically semantic contexts reflections that affirm the community's social order.

However, the events do not tell exactly the same story but rather they represent alternative visions, different parts that assemble the puzzle of a larger story. From this

perspective, the differences between the events illustrate these different parts. First, High School Football presents and promotes intense competitiveness and desire for winning. In contrast, Water Carnival promotes cooperation, and competition is not present except during the beauty pageants. Similarly, referential meta-performance in water and dance acts does not require exceptional performance by the performers. In contrast, High School Football requires the excellent performance by the team players, which is rewarded when the team wins. Another important difference is the role of the audience. In High School Football the fans express a more active attitude during the match perhaps due to their affective involvement with the local team. Their engagement with the team is expressed through cheering, applauds, boos, catcalls or making other noises during the match. The engagement of the fans is encouraged by team members who prompt them to “make some noise.” In contrast, the Water Carnival audience is rather passive as they attend the show and its engagement is not encouraged by the event organizers. Lastly, another difference concerns the frequency of the events. Water Carnival is an annual event while High School Football is recurrent during the football season. In other words, the symbolic social stage of High School Football events is repetitive and encompasses a range of different emotions and attitudes during the matches. This symbolic space and its associated meanings reflect oscillations in performance that impact on local people’s consciousness and understanding of their community. Water Carnival as an annual event entails a celebratory atmosphere that is well-planned and is embraced by the whole community. In this regard, it can be said that High School Football events constitute a series of oscillated performances that symbolically “test” the claims of the community and convey diverse feelings as a result of winning or losing. In turn, the proclaimed meta-

messages (i.e., civic pride, potency and vivacity) and community identity that are reflected through football are crystallized and celebrated in Water Carnival.

In light of the above interpretation, it could be said that Water Carnival is the culmination of a sequence of dramatic stories that High School Football events offer to the community. It is a celebratory conclusion taking place during the summer that summarizes, redefines and amplifies the proclaimed meta-messages and community identity promoted through High School Football. For this reason, it would be hard to imagine Fort Stockton without each of these events. Overall, the prominence of football, especially in the context of West Texas, defines to a great extent the community which, however, is complemented and harmonized in Water Carnival.

Finally, in terms of event planning both events derive social and economic benefits. Visitation to the community is achieved during football matches. The visitors are mainly friends and relatives of the visiting team. This reflects the potential of small recurring events to contribute to the attraction of tourism revenues. Social benefits are based on the social stage that football matches provide where local people demonstrate their identity and engage in social interaction. A sense of solidarity and sociability in the games contributes in turn to the enhancement of social networks within the community.

### **HARVEST FEST**

Harvest Fest is the area's major festival, an event that is augmented and contains many other smaller events and activities. The purpose of Harvest Fest is to promote agriculture, aquaculture and viniculture by celebrating local economy. This festival started in early 1990s and it was stimulated by the need to promote local wine. Event organizers pointed out:

We wanted to market our wine from Saint Genevieve, we wanted to do something to promote the Saint Genevieve winery here, so we thought about doing a festival. It started so we could do wine tasting and the following year we started adding the Vintage Dinner and other different sections to make it bigger such as the Fun Run and the Bike Run and then we added the car show and sports.

Harvest Fest is designed to be a family event. From this point of view, the event organizers added activities so that families can attend the festival and all their members have something to do. The event serves as a recreational opportunity for families in Fort Stockton but it also attracts visitors from neighboring communities. It is organized by the Tourism Department and thus it also aims to attract visitation to Fort Stockton and entice visitors' spending. Event organizers pointed out:

Harvest Fest is a family event; so there are all ages. Basically, it's more small-town festival environment, gathering in park, kids area, arts and crafts, we do a lot of music, street dance, we have a fun run, a bike tour, a softball tournament, anything that looks good to do in the summer, anybody can go -it's free- and everybody can enjoy themselves. So in that we target the local market and other people out of town in close proximity.

Harvest Fest takes place in late August, starting Friday night with the Vintage Dinner that assembles the elites of the community and the festivities continue on Saturday starting in the morning until late at night. The Vintage Dinner takes place at the historic Rooney Park's large Community Hall. It entails a meal that features a variety of Texas wines and premium beers. Entertainment includes a live Auction with items donated by area merchants and Texas Wineries. There is a \$35 entrance fee (2006 price) and the capacity of the Community Hall is about 300 people. The price of ticket includes the meal, wine, beer and a collectable wine glass or beer mug. Local people volunteer and serve the meal and wines. The coverage of Vintage Dinner by the local newspaper reported that the Dinner highlights Harvest Fest. In particular, the following commentary was reported in the aftermath of the event:



A rain shower, gourmet food, sparkling conversation and soft lights set the stage in the Large Community for the stars of the evening, the finest wines of Texas wineries. Represented at the cocktail hour and the dinner were Luz de Estrella, the newest of the Texas wineries, located in Marfa, Cap Rock Winery, Fall Creek/Twin Springs Vineyards, Llano Estacado, Messina Hof Winery, Pleasant Hill Winery, and the Mega Stars of the show, the wines of Ste. Genevieve Winery and Peregrine Hill from here in Fort Stockton. Ste. Genevieve Wines chose this event to unveil their newest wine, Sweet Texas Red. Prior to the dinner hour, the guests were invited to try several wines, included the Sweet Texas Red, which was such a crowd pleaser that it disappeared before the evening was over. Two hundred sixteen tickets were sold to local folk and many from out of town. Sam and Vickie from Midland were here for the car show held in conjunction with Harvest Fest. "We always come in on Friday before the show," she said, "but only discovered the Vintage Dinner a few years ago." She continued, "Now, it is one of the high points of the weekend." Anna from Fort Davis was a first time attendee at the dinner. "It was as nice or nicer than some of the wine tastings I have attended in San Antonio," she said. "I admit I am pleasantly surprised to find this here." (*Fort Stockton Pioneer*, August 31, 2006)

The Vintage Dinner is a social gathering of local people that encourages sociability and social interaction within the community. As the opening of the festival, Vintage Dinner has the symbolic meaning that Fort Stockton's social fabric supports the local economy. The popularity of Vintage Dinner, however and the limited capacity of the Community Hall made it difficult for local people to find tickets and participate in this event. Thus, there are thoughts of transferring the Vintage Dinner to a much larger venue in order to satisfy the increasing demand within the community. The success of the Vintage Dinner is also evident in the fact that it attracts out-of-town visitors, hence extending its appeal to out of the community's borders. Event organizers pointed out: "In our Vintage Dinner we had people coming out from Midland, about 30 people came from Midland and they asked: 'Do you have another Vintage Dinner? We're coming back.' They don't have that over there."

After the dinner, the auction takes place. Items in the auction include jewelry, kitchen items and candles with a grape theme. Each item in the auction is given with at

least one bottle of wine. The bidding in 2006 Vintage Dinner raised approximately \$3,000, an amount that was donated to the Harvest Fest Scholarship program. As soon as the Vintage Dinner is over, a Street Dance commences right out of the Community Hall, which is the central point of the festival. The Street Dance features country and Hispanic music played by a local DJ and reflects a spirit of celebration.

On Saturday the activities of the festival's program start early in the morning. Sport activities commence the festival epitomizing the playful character of the festival, which encourages attendants to actively participate in this community celebration. The recreational sport activities start with the 5k Fitness Walk and 5K Fun Run. Later the Wine Pedal Bike Tour takes place. The Bike Tour starts from the park and ends up at the local Winery, approximately 26 miles from the Large Community Hall at Rooney Park. The degree of difficulty is moderate and there are two Rest Stops where beverages and fresh fruit are available. Another sport activity is the Men's Softball Tournament where local teams compete for a \$500 grand prize. The addition of team sports serves as an attraction to the event for families so that their members have many options during the festival. Event organizers explained the reasons why they added softball to the festival's program:

There are many softball tournaments in this town. So if you can incorporate that with another event going on, then you can increase participation. Because the softball players want to bring their families, then obviously this gives wives and kids something to do while they play softball. And they usually have a break between the games and so they can just stay here and get something to eat, walk around or whatever. There is an option of things to do.

The participation in individual sport activities in 2006 was limited and significantly lower than previous years. About ten people took part in the Fun Run, another ten in the Bike Tour and only one in the Fun Walk. Event organizers seem to be

concerned about this decline in participation and explained it on the basis that the activities and registration for participation were early in the morning. While this may explain one aspect of the decline, other parameters that may affect the overall attendance of the festival should be taken into account. These are analyzed later in this section.

The core attraction of the festival is the Wine Emporium. It takes place at the Community Hall and it is open during the whole day of the festival. There is an entry fee of \$15 and visitors can taste a variety of Texas wines served by volunteers. Premium beer is also available. Appetizers are served throughout the day from local restaurants. Eight Texas Wineries take part in this promotional endeavor. The local Saint Genevieve winery is promoted in association with other Texas wines.

The augmentation of Harvest Fest comprises an array of activities that start at 10:00 A.M. Stage activities take place between 10:00 A.M. to 7:00 P.M. and include a wide range of activities such as a balloon launching contest, a hot dog eating contest, a dancing and gymnastics demonstration, live music from local bands, and a karate demonstration. These activities encourage local people to volunteer and perform for the local audience. They place performance in a variety of acts as a central feature in the festival. The logic of the activities is one of inclusion. These spontaneous shows encourage everyone to perform and demonstrate their talent. Mainly children participate and the parents attend their performances.

In this regard, the manifestation of show-like elements within the festival encourages event attendants to participate in the event or attract their attention to attend some type of performance. Most performances are enacted by groups and entail dancing, music, sports or contests. The location of different activities is adjacent so that it facilitates movement between them. The Wine Emporium is featured as the central

attraction in the Community Hall. Next to the Community Hall there is an array of food booths and the Farmers' Market. On the other side of the Community Hall, the Softball Tournament takes place. The Car Show is located at the other edge of the park covering half of the space of the festival.

The Harvest Fest ethos is characterized by playfulness, sociability, and festive consumerism. These behaviors epitomize and celebrate the community's image. In addition to local wine, a wide variety of local foods and snacks such as breakfast burritos, gorditas, BBQ, turkey legs, sausage on a stick, menudo, funnel cake, curly fries, caramel apples, cotton candy, snow cones, corn on the cob, etc. are sold by local vendors. The Farmer Market exemplifies the locality, consumerism, and display. In this context, the Farmer Market promotes the agricultural products of the area and farmers have the opportunity to showcase and sell their products. Thus, the festival demonstrates the support of the community to the local agricultural market.

Arts and crafts booths also join the festivities with various items that are available for purchase. Some crafters have the opportunity to demonstrate their talent throughout the day. Another activity is the KidzFest Corner that entertains children with inflated toys, arts and crafts. The playground area is close to the Farmer Market and the Car Show that encompass the meta-messages of the festival. The old cars show involves the participation of locals and people from neighboring communities (more than 100 people exhibit their cars). The importance of the Car Show and the meanings it creates warrants further analysis. The Car Show seems to convey mediated recollections, which reflect the shared experiences and preoccupations of the community with feelings of materialism, transcendence, and sexuality. Such ideals are symbolized through the cars in display. For example, an event visitor pointed out when he was looking at a car:

This car reminds me of my papa, a true West Texas Gentleman. We were talking in the store the morning of the race and both of us agreed that every day we spend above ground is a good day. He was always saying: "A car is a comfy, happy place. When you hit the velvet highway out there, that's when it all makes sense."

A car owner showcasing his car explained with pride: "My car is big but not too big. My girlfriend, coworkers and friends, and I, always take it out to lunch because as my friends say it is the hottest and sexiest car to be seen in." Another car owner explained why he loves his car: "I love my car because of the incredible styling that was built into it by its designer. And I love the fact that it's older than I am and it's still all factory-original and going strong! My car is a 1965 model. Her name is Pearl."

Pride is evident for local people who exhibit their cars to the local community. Old cars are implicated in a deep context of affective and embodied relations between people, machines and places, in which emotions and senses play a key part. The Car Show thus reassembles images and emotions in a festival that celebrates local economy. Social interaction and sociability are engendered in this symbolic social space where the fascination with automobiles is amalgamated with the celebration of local economy. In other words, individual pride for a car is associated in the festival with the communal pride for local economy. The old cars on show are observed with an intense, sentimental studiousness and people engage in conversations about the features of a car and any associated stories that exemplify them. Communication and social interaction of event attendants is stimulated by the representations that cars portray. For example, a long discussion about engine quality and characteristics was stirred up when a car owner emphasized the following to a couple of event attendants who were observing his car: "It's a high quality machine predominantly made of steel and electronics that can make you run faster than the wind."

The Car Show conveys representations of cars that become signifiers of meaning for event attendants and participants. Like other forms of signification, these representations of cars become naturalized codes through which people communicate. A participant of the Car Show pointed out: “What fascinates me is the individualism of the cars. It's plain to see that every car can become one of a kind. I've never followed trends or been at all interested in fashion, but I love beauty.” Another event participant explained: “Cars really do say something about people. Some pick cars that are very safe reflecting their cautious nature. Others pick very practical vehicles, which are great for growing families with lots of stuff and people to cart around.”

In general, cars are integral to the privatization, individualization and emotionalization of consumer society as a whole, in part due to the popular pleasures of auto-freedom (i.e., mobility, power, speed). Cars embody a cultural logic that is relatively autonomous and mediates, not only, the constant dynamic of social relations but also the strong emotional relationship of people within a community (Gartman, 2004; Sheller, 2004). Fascination and admiration for old cars is expressed as a symbolism of a machine-dominated culture that celebrates its ideals (i.e., Edensor, 2004; Featherstone, 2004; Gilroy, 2001; Inglis, 2004).

As symbols, cars captivate various meanings and cultivate polysemy by remaining open to a range of interpretations (Samuel & Thompson, 1990). In this sense, the emotional investments local people have in the relationships between their cars, themselves, their families and friends, are deeply materialized in their vehicles on show, which engender a symbolic semantic context within the festival. The polysemic character of the Car Show creates its own universe of meaning in relation with other semantic contexts within the festival. Hence, the Car Show as a symbolic semantic context within

Harvest Fest is a relational space in which people instantiate particular aesthetic orientations and kinesthetic dispositions towards cars and materialism. The Car Show also exemplifies patterns of sociability amplifying a sense of celebration and pride within the festival. The feelings of local people about cars materialize a collective ethos that strives to bolster the linkages between more general cultural patterns of individualism and competitiveness, and the need for cooperation and collectivism. This existential but also practical issue for a rural community is met in other events of Fort Stockton more or less explicitly, such as Water Carnival, sport events or fiestas. Cars are a common element of events that establish an apparently subtle connectivity among different events. For example, in Water Carnival there is an old car parade through which local people demonstrate their sense of who they are and celebrate their identity. The presence of cars is celebrated in turn in Harvest Fest along with the celebration of local economy.

From an organizational standpoint, Harvest Fest faces challenges. First of all, there is decline in attendance and participation in activities from local people. The event is mainly targeted to local people and then attracts visitors from neighboring communities but the last years less and less people from the community attended it. Event organizers pointed out:

13 years ago we had 8 to 9,000 people out at the park. And then through the years it went down. Sometimes the weather has a lot to do with it. For instance, when it is hot, people don't come over. This year, it rained on Friday night and few people came out to the park.

The decline in participation of local people and the economic burden that the organization of the festival entails, make the future of the event uncertain. Event organizers are concerned about the decline of local support and interest for the festival:

It's become not economically feasible anymore. We struggled the last three years to put it on because it is not being supported the way it used to be. A lot of the struggle pertains to the liability insurance that we have to

carry for the whole event and that is almost \$3,000. And this is because we serve alcohol. So attendance is lower and we don't have the support that we used to from the people, our own town, the people attending the Harvest Fest. When you don't see many people out there it tells you something.

The possible reasons for the decline in local attendance and participation in Harvest Fest are explained by event organizers on the basis of conflicting timing with other activities that happen in a small rural community like Fort Stockton and draw the attention of the people: "There are other things and activities going on in the community that draw a lot of people. So we had conflicting things." Similarly, one resident added: "Sometimes there is so much going on with the school starting and the football season and all the different things that maybe some parents had a conflict or sometimes they simply forget and remember later in the day." This raises the problem of the timely placement of the event within the portfolio. The possibility of conflict with other events, even contingent activities or weather conditions may cause decline in attendance. Event organizers pointed out: "For two years we moved the event to October, which proved not to be very good. For example, the reason we didn't have any cook-out participants was because it rained."

The number of events, which are organized in the community, however, seems to be at the root of the problem. In other words, the number is large comprising an extended event portfolio. The danger is that the extended number of events may cause saturation to potential audiences. This may result in local people being bored to attend the diverse events of the town. Also, the use of common elements in different events within a portfolio is a double-edge sword because there is a subtle line that separates connectivity among events from repetitiveness in a series of events. This can be delineated from the



analysis of thematic and conceptual interrelationships between Water Carnival (being the seminal community celebration) and Harvest Fest (being the major community festival).

**Table 6.2: Continuities between Water Carnival-Harvest Fest**

<b>Water Carnival (WC)</b>	<b>Harvest Fest (HF)</b>
Staged Show	Staged Activities
Old Cars Parade	Old Car Show
Sports: Synchronized Swimming	Sports: Biking, Running, Walking, Softball
Choreographed Dance Acts	Street Dancing
Participation of Families and Children	Activities for the Family
Water as a Metaphor	Playing with Water
Celebrating Local Identity	Celebrating Local Economy

Table 6.2 summarizes the continuities between Water Carnival and Harvest Fest that illustrate their connectivity. First, the role of performance connects the events. In Water Carnival there is a staged show performed by local people and children, while Harvest Fest entails a number of stage activities that encourage local people and children to demonstrate their talent even in a more liberated or spontaneous fashion. Water Carnival, as a staged show, requires the dedication and hard work in rehearsals for a period of time, while Harvest Fest allows in its celebratory atmosphere people to perform spontaneously. Similarly, Water Carnival features rehearsed choreographed dance acts, while Harvest Fest invites event attendants to spontaneous street dancing. The continuity between performance and “show-like staging” in both events offers different opportunities for enactment and spectation and each event complements the other. The old cars parade in Water Carnival and the old car show in Harvest Fest also establish connectivity between the different events and reaffirm community identity through the mediated recollections that cars convey. Sports and physical activity is another common element between the events. Water Carnival features synchronized swimming, while in Harvest Fest there is a bike tour, running, walking and softball. These sport activities in

Harvest Fest offer other opportunities for people to participate and perform and audiences to attend. The continuity of sport performance takes place through these two events, which complement each other in terms of sport activities offered and opportunities for participation.

Another important continuity is the use of water in both events. In Water Carnival it is used more as a metaphor with synchronized swimming acts aiming to instantiate the meaning of water to participants and the audience. In Harvest Fest, the playful character of the festival allows firemen to spray tones of water with their hoses on children and adults. Playing with water in a festival that celebrates local economy helps people instantiate the value that the water has for the community. The continuity between these two events offers different versions that the value of water can be instantiated by event attendants. Thus, this sort of implicit connectivity between Water Carnival and Harvest Fest complements and reinforces each event's meta-messages. Another aspect that bolsters connectivity between the two events is the targeted audiences. Both events target families with their children to participate and attend the events. In Water Carnival parents along with their children perform in the acts. In Harvest Fest there are activities for all the family to enjoy and stay in the festival. In this way both events bolster the family networks and social fabric of a small rural community. Finally, a visible continuity between the two events derives from the thematic meaning of their celebratory character. Both events are celebrations, though they celebrate different aspects of the community. Water Carnival celebrates local identity, while Harvest Fest celebrates local economy. The negotiation and reconciliation between the antithetic characteristics of competition and cooperation, individualism and collectivism, commercialization and social benefit becomes more explicit when taking these events together. While it helps local people to

create and present a communal cultural ideology, it also helps to have a value system and deontological context to deal with the problems of the community.

Harvest Fest has also relationship with other events and indicates capitalization of the event portfolio on the capacity to host successful events. As a major community festival, Harvest Fest serves as a paradigm transferring knowledge and experience towards the organization of other events in Fort Stockton. Event organizers pointed out: “Other events try to follow the footsteps of Harvest Fest as far as having the booths and activities. For example, there is a new event coming this weekend, the Labor Day Fiesta. And they are inviting all the booths to come out again.”

Finally, it must be noted that Harvest Fest, in its present form, was eliminated from the event portfolio the following year. There were discussions about the future of some successful elements of the festival, for which there is great demand. Those elements will continue to be organized as conveyed by a local event organizer:

Harvest Fest will probably disseminate but we can always have a Vintage Dinner, we can always have wine tasting. It is the extra of it that we will probably not have. We discussed that we will have the Vintage Dinner. We will just put it in another event or by itself, we don't know yet how we'll work it out but we'll keep doing it because it's so popular.

#### **LABOR DAY WEEKEND FIESTA**

The Labor Day Weekend Fiesta is a new event organized by that portion of the Hispanic population who are also members of the Harvest Fest organizing committee. The CVB co-sponsors the event, which creates an opportunity for the Labor Day weekend to be celebrated in town. In terms of economic objectives, the purpose of the event is to keep people in town during the weekend because there are also other events in neighboring communities. Fort Stockton strives to maintain local income by enticing the

spending of residents in the events of Fort Stockton. This is a strategic move, to place a new event in a time frame to compete for attendance with events in other communities.

Festivities start on Saturday morning and last until Sunday night. The Fiesta targets mainly Hispanics of Fort Stockton and features elements of Hispanic culture such as Mariachi music and demonstrations of folk dancing. The Fiesta takes place in Nunez Park. This park is much smaller than Rooney Park and it is used for small events that aim to celebrate in a cordial environment. The influence of Harvest Fest is explicit in this new event, which is in essence a mini version of Harvest Fest. It features similar activities such as a car show, sport activities, games, arts and crafts and food booths. The creation of this event illustrates a capacity for replicability in terms of event production for Fort Stockton's event portfolio. In other words, a new event can be created on the basis of a successful one. The advantages of such a process are clear: the knowledge and expertise that people gained through the organization of a successful event may be transferred to another event and similar activities that are popular may be offered to target audiences. This is the case with the Labor Day Weekend Fiesta. However, this process has disadvantages that mainly lie in the mimetic characteristics when events are replicated. In other words, if a new event is just a mimesis of another event this may not cause any interest to potential audiences, make them bored through the repetitiveness of similar activities and constrain a mindset for novelty in the creation of new events. For this reason, replicability in events should seek to address a new need or issue by offering similar activities, which attract event attendants. In the case of the Labor Day Weekend Fiesta, this is illustrated through an analysis of the similarities and differences with Harvest Fest.

First of all, both events are family events and include a range of activities for the members of the whole family. Thus, there are sport activities and games in both events. The Fiesta includes a Girls Fast Pitch Softball Tournament and a Washer Tournament. The commercialization in both events is part of the intention to support local economy with local vendors selling their products to local people. The celebratory character of both events is amplified by music, singing and night dance, which engender sociability and social interaction. As in Harvest Fest, a car show with fewer participants features the subculture of local Hispanic car club and demonstrates feelings of pride, celebrating and parading the identity of participants. In terms of social value the Fiesta, like Harvest Fest, provides another recreational opportunity for local people to come together and celebrate, which enhances the social and family networks as well as the community identity.

What mainly distinguishes the Fiesta, however, is that it is a Hispanic event for Hispanic audiences. It is a celebration of the Labor Day by Hispanic people and there is minimal audience from the Anglo-American population of the community. While the Fiesta is a new event and needs some time to be recognized and embraced by the whole community it is mainly designed to enhance the social and family networks of Hispanic people in the community. The inclusion of folkloric Hispanic features indicates that there is a need to celebrate the Hispanic culture since it is not represented in major community events such as Water Carnival. In relation to other events, the Fiesta is a complementary event within Fort Stockton's event portfolio providing the same activities but mainly for Hispanic audiences. In this respect, the social value of the Fiesta is to enable Hispanics to enact and celebrate their identity.

## **16 DE SEPTIEMBRE FIESTA**

The 16 de Septiembre Fiesta celebrates the day of the call to arms that resulted in the Independence of Mexico. It is organized by the Fort Stockton's Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. The Hispanic community of Fort Stockton gathers to celebrate their identity as Mexicans. The Fiesta offers also an occasion for social interaction and sociability among Hispanic people. The event includes similar activities to other events in Fort Stockton and features the Hispanic tradition. It is an eclectic assemblage of elements and activities found in other events of Fort Stockton that appeal to Hispanic people.

The activities include a Huacha Toss Tournament, beauty pageant, face painting and cake walk, piñatas, japaleno eating contest, pictures with pony, music, and a night dance. The festivities start with a parade in the center of the town, the same place that the Water Carnival parade takes place. There is actually an implicit connectivity of the 16 de Septiembre Fiesta with Water Carnival. As all the community demonstrated its identity in the Water Carnival parade, there is also a need for Hispanic people to parade as Mexicans. While the same people with the same cars take part in both parades, in the Fiesta many businesses display floats in the parade, which demonstrate their pride in the Hispanic traditions. The flag of Mexico flies over many of the vehicles as they tour the parade route. There is also an explicit continuity with Water Carnival. Hispanic origin winners of Water Carnival beauty pageants take part in the parade of the Fiesta. The event organizers pointed out:

After the Water Carnival the only one who get noticed anymore is Miss Fort Stockton. Everybody else forgets all the others. It is only the night of Water Carnival and no one else sees them again. So we wanted them to participate and give them a little bit more exposure.

The similarities with other events are mainly with the Labor Day Weekend Fiesta and Harvest Fest. There is a Washer Tournament in the Labor Day event and a Huacha

Toss Tournament in the 16 de Septiembre Fiesta. There is also the same music and dancing while both events take place in the same small and cordial park (Nunez Park). Common elements also derive from Harvest Fest in terms of the food booths and activities for the whole family.

The same day that the Fiesta took place (in 2006) there was also the annual Health Fair in the community. While this might be conflicting and could decrease visitation to the Fiesta, local people viewed them as complementary events. The Health Fair targeted older people while the Fiesta had many activities for parents and their children. As one of the organizers of the Fiesta pointed out: “I don’t think there is conflict at all; pretty much we all do different things and we try not to step on each other, when we have events at the same time.”

In terms of the social value of the Fiesta, it mainly derives from the enactment of existing social relationships and enhancement of the family networks in a community, as it also happens with the Labor Day Weekend Fiesta. It appears that in the context of a small rural community like Fort Stockton the portion of the Hispanic population seeks opportunities to validate their identity and engage in social interaction. Event organizers point out the fundraising purpose of the event for scholarships:

But more than a party or a good time, it helps fund scholarships for students from the local high school. Thousands of dollars each year are raised by the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce for the single purpose of sending more young people to colleges and universities. This can do nothing but improve not only the community but the state and the nation. Education is the base for every strong society.

### **PIONEER DAYS**

The Pioneer Days is an historical event featuring collective recollections of the area’s life in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The event intends to project the pioneer spirit that

characterizes the local history of the area as part of the West. The explicit purpose of the event is to preserve history and local identity and educate the youth about the past. The event takes place at the Historic Fort aiming to reflect the military history of the area. A resident pointed out: “[Pioneer Days] promotes a historical aspect of our community and it needs to continue to do that.”

The activities of the event comprise a set of projections that represent a selective imaginary of the conditions in the past. The event is organized in different sections, each projecting a particular aspect of pioneer life. For example, there is the section of genealogy/herbs & plants/pioneer women that illustrates the agricultural products and how were used by women in the daily life of families. Another section includes the re-enactors meals where local people re-enact the preparation and consumption of a traditional meal. A major section of the event includes the military row where local people re-enact the soldiers’ military activities. They are dressed as soldiers and perform military exercises. There are also sections of civilians/gourds, a petting zoo, children’s games, and horse care as well as roping. At the centre of Historic Fort there are snake handlers that aim to entertain the public.

The enactment of the event features costumed participants who assemble from around the state to enact uniformed drills, gunfights, frontier homemaking and all the aforementioned activities. The festivities begin on Thursday night with a silent auction hosted by the Friends of the Fort to raise funds for use at the fort. Friday is the history education day, with re-enactors demonstrating life skills and military tactics from the 1800’s to approximately more than 400 students from area schools, including 150 students from Fort Stockton Middle School. The remaining students come from towns



such as Odessa, Grandfalls, Midland and Balmorhea. On Saturday, local people and visitors can tour the grounds and learn about the history of the fort.

The concept and naming of Pioneer Days is based on an older event called Living History Days. The latter started as an effort to promote the Historic Fort as the major attraction in the area. A resident pointed out:

The Living History Days came about during a period when the City of Fort Stockton took on a project for rebuilding and reconstructing the old Fort. This was back in late 80s. So the City decided to rebuild some of the Fort and save the Fort that it already had. Once they got that done then they came up with a project to promote the Fort. And that's when they came up with this Living History Days.

It is clear that there is an intention by the community to utilize the event as an occasion, which showcases the fort as a tourism attraction. This coexists with the educational use of the event. Thus, Fort Stockton utilizes Pioneer Days for both economic and social benefits. The purposes of the event seem to be supported by different factions of the community, which come together during the event. A resident pointed out:

I don't know who came up with the idea, there was a pretty large meeting of people who were involved in the community from different factions of the community and somehow the idea Living History Days came up to show the people what soldiers looked like back in those cowboy and Indian days, show the dress attire, the culture that there was back in those days, the dancing, the way food was cooked in those days and so on. Anyway it was to promote our history to the public, our community and to the outsiders bringing more visitors and money to the community.

The new conception and naming of the event as Pioneer Days is intended to embrace a wider representation of the area's local history including elements of the Hispanic and Indian traditions. The logic behind this wider representation is that "pioneers" are viewed as all people, who first lived in the area independently of their heritage. Event organizers explained the reasons why they changed the concept and name of the event:

Living History Days was about the military history, the Buffalo soldiers' history. The Pioneer Days encompasses the whole pioneer era, soldier life and civilian life at the time as well, and that's why we changed it. Because the community is getting a little bit tired of the same thing every year. And so we changed it for that reason.

However, local people do not seem to understand the difference between the new naming and the old concept of the event. It rather seems that the continuation of the event entails the same meaning. A resident pointed out: "Living History Days was to promote Fort Stockton, how it was back in 1850s and 1860s and to me that's Pioneer Days."

The event in 2006 did not attract the attention of local people and hence attendance was limited. Event organizers explained the limited participation on the basis that it is a new event. The main problem was to secure funding, which they achieved at the last moment. This, however, did not allow them to have time to promote the event in the community. Event organizers pointed out: "Because it is a new event, we didn't have it the last year, we weren't sure until the last moment if we were going to have funding from the City or not but we did." The extent to which the Pioneer Days is a new event or the continuation of the Living History Days seems to confuse the local people. While there is a strong connection between the two events, the intention of what Pioneer Days purports to be was not promoted. Local people thus perceived the event as the continuation of the Living History Days. Since this was the perception of local people, the limited attendance could be understood as declining participation and loss of interest in this type of event.

The organization of the event revealed also a number of tensions among local people. First, there were tensions regarding how to allocate funds on different events, specifically what groups of people and types of events should receive funding from the City. Some event participants expressed their antithesis towards events like Harvest Fest

that “sells wines,” and would like to have more support for such events that promote the history of the region and are education tools. It is logical for this kind of tension to exist in a portfolio that comprises a range of different types of events, where certain factions of people in a community have opposite interests. The tourism potential of these events seems to be the common denominator that converges the efforts by the CVB and the Chamber for hosting and supporting events as different as Water Carnival, Harvest Fest and Pioneer Days. In the case of Pioneer Days, it attracts schools from Odessa and other neighboring communities and therefore potentially contributing to the tourism development of the region by attracting visitation of about 500 students every year and increasing Fort Stockton’s visibility.

Another tension concerned the content and imaginary of the event. Issues of historical representation arose, which projected mainly the interpretation of the Anglo-American side of history. For example, there was not representation of Native Americans in the event although it was intended. Logistical matters, as it was explained, precluded the participation of Native Americans. The fort projected the military history and in this context the Hispanic representation promoted those historic figures who were part of the Anglo-American army. The collective imaginary of the event conveyed messages of what history means for the present. In this regard, the elements of the event represented symbols that conveyed meanings from the event out to the community. For example, at the center of the event was positioned a snake handler attraction as an entertainment option for event attendants. This attraction was thought as fitting the historical character of the Wild West and the image of a rugged rural community. However, it was perceived as controversial by some local people who did not like this type of entertainment and did not identify the history of the region with this imaginary. The placement of the attraction

at the center of the event revealed the tensions about what should be included in this type of event, which is intended to be primarily educational. The intentionality of the event, as was stated by event organizers, was to embrace and project the history of the whole region:

The history is very important, the Buffalo soldiers' history is important to our area, the Pioneer history, the Indian history, the Hispanic history. That's the most important thing to us. That is not forgotten and children are educated through being in the cultural place that they can see where history took place and see people demonstrating the way things were at that time.

Finally, Pioneer Days seems disconnected from other events in the Fort Stockton's portfolio. However, if we consider the meta-narratives and meta-messages conveyed through Water Carnival, Harvest Fest, Fiestas, and High-School Football events, the Pioneer Days comes to fill the historical context of the community and reaffirm the claims of the other events. As a resident pointed out: "Pioneer Days deals with the history and the founding of the town. Other events celebrate what we are now while the Pioneer Days celebrates what we were in the past."

#### **BIG BEND OPEN ROAD RACE**

The Big Bend Open Road Race (BBORR) is the most important sport event in Fort Stockton's event portfolio from a sport tourism and economic standpoint. It was first organized in April, 1998 and since then it has grown rapidly. The race is co-organized by the cities of Fort Stockton and Sanderson, which are connected by the highway known as US-285. The official race distance from Fort Stockton to Sanderson is 59 miles. Thus, the total mileage, there and back, is 118. The race gives the chance to racing-car enthusiasts to legally drive as fast as they like on a U.S. highway for 118 miles and do so in relative safety. The race started with an idea to shut the highway down for a day in order to be

used as a racecourse. The race has proven so successful that event coordinators organize also a second race every October in the highway US-385 from Fort Stockton to Marathon. The distance from Fort Stockton to Marathon is 40 miles and the total mileage, there and back is 80. The name Road Runner Open Road Race (RRORR) was given to the second race to differentiate it from the BBORR.

Both races entail a rally-style competition, which are regarded as some of the most challenging open road races in the United States. Race contestants point out that the race routes have extreme changes in elevation and a number of major curves. An event participant pointed out: “There is an addictive quality to speed that’s hard to put into words, and this particular course is the most challenging in road races I’ve attended. It’s a very technical course; it’s a driver’s course.” In BBORR, the last 50 miles of the course takes drivers through 59 individual turns. Of the about eight open-road courses in America, none has so many turns and elevation changes as the U.S. 285 highway between Fort Stockton and Sanderson. This gives the opportunity for exciting driving independently of speed. On average about 150 racers (many with friends and family along to help navigate) participate every year in each of the races.

Racers that participate in this event are drivers that come as far away as the West and East Coasts. Also, plenty of Texans from every corner of the state participate. Many competitors are just weekend hobbyists, or thrill seekers who want to have the experience of road racing. Most of the racers spend a four-day weekend in such a type of event. The races are held on Saturday and most people arrive on Wednesday or Thursday. The race-cars used in this event are impressive and diverse. They range from the exotic such as a Pantera from Elkhart, Ind., to classics such as a 1962 Dodge Polara, to a sparkling new 2000 Chevrolet Corvette. Racers compete in five speed classes, beginning with a target

speed of 85 mph and topping out at 160 mph. A selective number of participants qualify for Unlimited status, where cars typically have target speed of 200 mph or more. Except for the Unlimited cars, where the fastest speed wins, the objective is to average the target speed exactly.

Both races are a carefully organized cooperative endeavor between the cities involved, the Texas Department of Transportation, local law enforcement and emergency teams, and the more than 100 volunteers who help ensure the racers' safety. The major operations of the event involve the closing of the race routes for traffic a few hours before the first car leaves the starting line. Soon thereafter, volunteers gate-watchers equipped with two-way radios take their places at 85 "com stations" along the course to radio in possible problems, whether mechanical or other. Two airplanes supervise the race route from above, and fire trucks, helicopters, and ambulances stand ready in case of an emergency. The Tourism Department is the coordinator of this event. Both races entail the same characteristics with different routes and co-organizing towns (Sanderson and Marathon). In essence, the races are the same event that takes place twice in Fort Stockton's event portfolio. For this reason, the BBORR is mainly analyzed in this section because the RRORR is a replication of the BBORR.

Being the most profitable event of the year for Fort Stockton, the open road races are more than a race, they are several day-long events that generate tourism revenues through the spending of event participants. Thus, ancillary events are organized to amplify sociability and heighten a sense of celebration for racers and the community. In particular, there is a racer's parade in Fort Stockton's main street, a car show in Rooney Park, an awards banquet in the Civic Center, and parties along the way in the cities involved. Also, the Tourism Department moves to integrate the races with the

community's tourism product and service mix by offering "adventure cruises" (optional tours of the area) to racers as part of the event's schedule on Friday from 8:00 to 12:00 before the event activities commence.

By the time the event approaches and cars start arriving, Fort Stockton seems to embrace a road-race celebration. In the main street of Fort Stockton in the entrance of the town there is a big banner saying: "Welcome Racers." Discussions on the streets and stores revolve around the race and who might take home the most trophies and bragging rights. The racers are easily recognizable as they drive around town: they are the ones with sport-shifter decals on their windshields, high-performance-driving-school stickers on their bumpers, and racing numbers affixed to their side panels (Texas Highways, 2005). Local businesses and especially hotels and restaurants welcome them with enthusiasm and many have posted on their doors and premises: "Welcome, Big Bend Road Racers." This demonstrates that the community and local businesses embrace a common theming for the event in order to create a sense of celebration, which appreciates and welcomes the event participants. In turn, the economic benefit of the event derives from enticing event participants to spend money on local restaurants and hotels and plan to return the following year.

In particular, the racers' overall experience in the event can be understood as an adventure sport tourism experience. This entails the characteristics of thrill-seeking that participants want to experience through speeding in a highway, which are complemented by the natural context of the region such as a remote desert, tough weather conditions and possible storms. The subculture of racers includes people, primarily with discretionary income, who meet in every race and share their fascination for fast cars and speed. Friendships and the need for camaraderie among racers are vital and the participants are

looking for opportunities to parade and celebrate their identity as racers. In this context, the event is loaded with registration, technical inspections, driving schools, welcome parties and the car show as well as parade, where the public can interact with the racers and admire the fascinating automobiles. While competition on race day can be fierce, the camaraderie among the racers is noteworthy. As several event participants point out: “We're all in this together! The motto is: have fun, be safe, and come back next year!” Another event participant pointed out: “At first, it was about getting to blast down the highway at what would normally be illegal speeds. But then, the race became almost like a family reunion. I think now, even if I didn't have a car to run, I'd come just to see everyone.”

Event organizers, therefore, strive to help bolster camaraderie among event participants through the ancillary events such as meetings, parties, the car show and parade. This also gives the opportunity to the audience to meet and interact with the racers. Sociability and interaction of event participants with local people is thus encouraged in this context. A racer pointed out:

What do I like most? Definitely the adrenaline rush. But it's not just about the race. It's the parade, the car show, the after-race party at the park, the whole deal. Fort Stockton is the friendliest town on the road racing circuit. I'm glad to be here and glad that this type of racing is possible here.

Event organizers prompt to promote the West Texas hospitality, the food of the area and the opportunity for drivers to compete to their limits in a challenging highway. They like to say that out-of-state participants feel a little overwhelmed with Texas hospitality but are growing accustomed to it during the days they spend in Fort Stockton for the event. The projection of Fort Stockton's friendliness and hospitality serves also to cultivate the identity of Fort Stockton as a friendly and nice place to live in West Texas. In this regard, the races confirm and accentuate to outsiders the claims of the rest of



events in Fort Stockton's event portfolio like Water Carnival, Harvest Fest, and High School Football. They demonstrate the capacity of the community to host an event for a target market that represents a subculture across the U.S. taking advantage of the natural resources and willingness of local people to help as volunteers.

From this point of view, thematic connectivity of the events is engendered. The establishment of connectivity among these events is achieved through the conceptual continuity that the prominence of cars as a cultural object of communication conveys. The Harvest Fest and the Fiestas feature car shows and along with the Water Carnival entail parades with old cars. The BBORR comes to celebrate excellence and transcendence by the expert racers and the community takes the role of the spectator, volunteer and host. The coordinating role of the CVB, which supports all the events in order to yield economic benefits, is a functional parameter of the continuity between the road races and the aforementioned events. However, in the context of the event portfolio the social value that derives for the community through the interrelationship of these events is that the road race celebrates an aspect of Fort Stockton's social order, namely sociability, volunteer collectivity and fascination with the cars. These exemplify the need for social interaction, which is linked with the materialism for cars being a polysemic object/symbol. From this perspective, the interest of local people towards the races is interlinked with the meanings that the aforementioned events convey and make a complete story for the "small-town charm" of Fort Stockton.

In general, the cultural expression of car subcultures may be fragmented and different, but the meanings are the same: freedom, escape, difference (Gartman, 2004). Accordingly, the subculture of racers is a mix of people who symbolize the transcendence of human limits. The fascination and identification of local people with such a subculture

is a point of community pride and recognition by the outside world for the worth of Fort Stockton as a respectable community. The following article by Fort Stockton's local newspaper seeks to articulate and explain the community's fascination with the event:

What is it about fast cars that fascinate us so much? I'm not sure what it is, but Fort Stockton is most definitely fascinated with the cars in the Big Bend Open Road Race. The town starts buzzing as soon as the first Viper or out of state Corvette arrives in town. I know my five year old, Jesse, was in heaven at the car show and at the "party in the park" Saturday afternoon. His only complaint was, "When do we get to go to the race?" He couldn't quite understand that he couldn't actually go watch the race.... except we could... via the internet. The streaming video that was set up in the park by Wireless Frontier was great. And the sound effects were the best touch. Everyone kept running over there when they heard that roar of the cars going by. My kids sure loved it. For this race not being a spectator sport, Fort Stockton has sure embraced it. Businesses around town displayed "Welcome Open Road Racers" signs, and I was glad to see that. Fort Stockton is a special town, and we show it. Many of the racers have commented how welcome they feel here and how nice the people are. That is a big part of what makes this event so successful each year. You may not think that walking up to a racer and simply saying "Welcome to Fort Stockton - glad you could be a part of our race" would have an impact, but it does. That small gesture could be what sticks in that person's mind and brings that racer back next year. And, it could bring that racer back for other events in the area - all of which helps our economy. No matter how much Fort Stockton grows, I hope we never lose that small-town charm. We have a lot going on in this small town - lots of "big-city" stuff happening. As long as our attitude stays "small town" Fort Stockton will continue to be successful. (*Fort Stockton Pioneer*, January 5, 2003)

Cars carry socially constructed meanings that are an integral part of the cultural environment with which we see ourselves as human (Miller, 2001; Sheller, 2004; Young, 2001) and testify to an individual's status in the community (Inglis, 2004; Hebdige, 1988). In this respect, the Fort Stockton's event portfolio comprises cars as cultural means of expression. The car shows in the BBORR, Harvest Fest and the Fiestas exemplify a rich iconography or set of symbols, objects and artifacts, which can be assembled and reassembled by different groups in numerous combinations. This multiplicity of meanings freely constructed by different people within the community to

express their own identities prompts their inclusion in the different events as common elements that complete a meta-language pertinent to the messages of the events.

The car show and parade in functional terms demonstrate Fort Stockton's leverage of subcultural identity by enabling racers to celebrate and parade their identity. For the racers this is also a good time for social interaction, bonding and relaxation. This also creates excitement about the race and local people come to watch the cars, talk with the racers and attend the parade. The car show and parade take place on Friday afternoon. After the drivers' meeting, all the cars and drivers line up at Rooney Park for the pre-race car show. Young visitors have their pictures taken with their favorite cars and many even have the honor of sitting in the cars. Right after the car show, the racers parade their cars from the park through downtown and end at the Pecos County Civic Center. There, a meeting with the volunteer gate-keepers takes place. The main purpose is to instruct them on their tasks and safety issues. On Saturday after the race, there is a post-race car show where local people may visit again with the racers who can explain their personal experience of the race. Also, there are opportunities to interact with the racers, picture taking, autographs signing, and just chatting. In the evening there is the banquet that brings the visitors and community together for the awards.

Another interrelationship of the races with the other events in Fort Stockton's portfolio is the involvement of volunteers. Like Water Carnival there is a substantial amount of people who volunteer to help in the organization of the event. Hence, collective effort towards the accomplishment of a common purpose is sought and projected by the local authorities. It is often stated that the only way to watch the race first hand is to volunteer and sign up as a course worker. Local people and out-of-town race aficionados take this opportunity to volunteer in order to see the race. Many of them

choose particular gates every year and volunteer in groups. They point out that they have good time drinking beers and sharing their fascination about fast cars. The ancillary events help to engender a generalized camaraderie among volunteers, racers and attendants during the event. The following article published in the Fort Stockton's local newspaper is a call for people to volunteer to the event:

Spring is in the air, and preparations for the Big Bend Open Road Race are in full swing. As always spectators are not allowed on the race course during the race, but anyone wishing to see the race first hand is encouraged to become a volunteer, or a course worker. There are 89 ranch and road "gates" in the 59-mile stretch that makes up the BBORR, between Fort Stockton and Sanderson. "We need at least one person at each gate," said Fort Stockton volunteer coordinator. "We have several people who have kept the same gate since the race began 5 years ago, as well as land owners who like to watch their own gates," said the volunteer coordinator. "If you would like to be placed at the same location as you did in the past years, you need to call me at the City of Fort Stockton as soon as possible, so I can get you listed for this year." New course workers are also welcome. "While there is a degree of responsibility involved, we encourage small groups of people to work together and enjoy the day of all out open road racing." There are also some stipulations with gate watching, "once you are at your position you cannot leave until the Race Director releases you, so you need to be prepared to spend the day. (*Fort Stockton Pioneer*, March 20, 2003)

The last interrelationship between the races and the other events in Fort Stockton's portfolio is the intention to make the race, more enjoyable for the whole community by including activities for the whole family as in other events. Thus, there are booths and a party in the Rooney Park, which complement the ancillary activities. In one year's event for example, since an open road race is not a spectator sport, a locally owned company gave racing fans, friends and relatives, a chance to watch the race in the park. With internet employees doubling as gate keepers, cameras were set up, and a screen, with a live feed was available for viewing in the park. The Hispanic Chamber of Commerce sold the food from their trailer and Valley Distributors provided the refreshments. Returning racers and members of the community were able to continue to

view the race live and enjoy the after-race footage both in the park and at the awards banquet.

The following excerpt from an article of the Fort Stockton's local newspaper points out the successful organization of the BBORR in 2004:

The 2004 Big Bend Open Road Race has set the standard by which all other small-town events should be measured. There was nothing small-town about it. The race - a 118-mile round trip on Highway 285 from Fort Stockton to Sanderson and back - allows the competitors to run their vehicles at top speeds on the closed highway. [...] Along with the hard work of the race organizers and volunteers, many teams commented on the friendliness of our citizens. Just another reason for them to come back and spend their money in Fort Stockton. The hotels were full; the restaurants were hopping; and cash registers were ringing at a fevered pitch for many businesses. While the totals aren't yet in, last year's race, with less than 80 teams brought in more than \$1 million. Hard work plus West Texas friendliness equals dollars. It's a great formula. (*Fort Stockton Pioneer*, April 29, 2004)

The above excerpt illustrates the local understanding of what this event means for the community and projects Fort Stockton as worthy of emulation in the organization of events. Clearly, the meta-message that the identity of Fort Stockton as a strong West Texas community characterized by friendliness, hospitality and pioneer spirit is conveyed again and confirmed through this event in synergy with the meaning of the rest of events. This way the identity that the community proclaims to be is validated, accentuated and seeks to be crystallized in the conscience of local people and outside world alike. In other words, a coherent image of Fort Stockton is presented and substantiated through the implementation of a series of events, which represent a set of dramatic stories synthesized as an episodic but complete conceptual meta-narrative.

The success of BBORR encouraged the community to replicate this event. As already noted a second race, the RRORR, was instituted on the basis of market demand, which was not satisfied by the BBORR. Recently, there are thoughts for further

replication of the BBORR. In particular, local people conceived a new event, which is an Open Road Motorcycle Rally. One of the prospective organizers explained:

We are talking about possible having the equivalent to the BBORR but it would be motorcycles. This type open road race that allows motorcycles to run is not quite known in the U.S. and if we actually put on this event we will be one of the very few places or maybe the only one in the nation having this type of race. Probably to be held in Spring. We already have the resources and experience, so we apply the overlay to new events.

The idea for replicating the BBORR to a new event that will be for motorcycles seems to have potential for realization if we consider that there is market demand and Fort Stockton may use the same resources and experience. However, there is a problem with the limited resources especially person power who would implement this new event. Also, considering the currently high number of events in Fort Stockton's portfolio it seems that a new event would not only put pressure on the scarce resources of a small community but also would possibly bring saturation of local interest to attend and support all the events in the portfolio. In other words, even if the new event was successful it might have implications for other events such as declining support in some of them. It is, therefore, essential to consider potential unintended outcomes that hosting a new event may create for existing ones.

#### **MOTORCYCLE ROAD RUNNER RALLY**

The Motorcycle Road Runner Rally was first organized in Fort Stockton eight years ago. The first year there were 63 registered people but since then the event has grown and in the last event there were 550. Most motorcycle visitors are from West Texas area, mainly from 200 mile radius. The main activities of the event include games, which in organizers' words "promote friendly competition." In particular, there is the Slow Race where the winner is the slowest rider. This game is basically a balancing act

on motorcycle. A contestant should not go fast because the one who arrives at the finish line first loses. The balancing act disallows to put feet on the ground and requires enough speed be given to the motorcycle so that it moves but then should slow down and balance. Another game in this event is the Tennis Ball where the contestants have a partner-rider. The driver has to go and pass through a set of six cones and the passenger has to put a ball on each of these cones. In addition to the above main activities, music, dancing and food booths are provided for entertainment.

The event takes place in Nunez Park (same facility that the Fiestas also take place) the third weekend in August every year starting on Friday morning and ending on Saturday night. The smaller size of the park is suitable for creating a cordial environment for event participants. The event explicitly serves as an occasion for bringing people to share and celebrate their identity as bikers. Social interaction and sociability are encouraged through the games, music and dancing. Local people who belong to this subculture participate in the organization of the event and its associated activities. There are also local people who do not belong to this subculture but they come to socialize in the event. This makes the event a recreational opportunity for the residents of Fort Stockton. The event is one of a plethora of similar events for bikers that happen in the area. Since there is subculture of bikers in Fort Stockton, the community chose to host this specific event, which increases the variety of its event portfolio. It engenders another target market providing a recreational opportunity for local people and attracts bikers as visitors to the community. In relation to the rest of the events, the Motorcycle Road Runner Rally enhances the image and reputation of Fort Stockton to the area as a joyous, sociable and eventful town. The event organizers explained how they understand the fit

of this event in the community's portfolio: "It's a different type of event and it gives this community a variety of another event attracting people with different interests."

In terms of event outcomes, both economic and social benefits derive for the community. The attraction of a few hundred bikers for a weekend to Fort Stockton generates tourism revenues for the community especially spending in local hotels, restaurants and gas stations. The event is one of the small events such as the softball and basketball tournaments, which attract visitation to Fort Stockton for one or two days. Social benefits concern the enhancement of sociability and social interaction for local people. Event organizers point out about the purposes of this event:

The reasons for having this event are: one to get Fort Stockton another event, two to bring people in for tourism so that people will spend money in Fort Stockton, motels, grocery stores, cafes, restaurants that kind of stuff. The other reason was to raise money for some needy purposes. And when we first started out we tried to raise money for individuals that needed like medical bills they had to pay for and that kind of stuff. And when we finally got away from that we raised money for the Dollars for Scholars program.

As with other events of Fort Stockton's portfolio (i.e., Fiestas, Harvest Fest, etc.) it is emphasized by event organizers that a portion of event revenues goes towards social causes. This does not mean that the social problems will be resolved in such a way but it rather conveys a meta-message to the community that the development of the area may be achieved through collective effort. Throughout a series of events this meta-message, which in major events such as Water Carnival is celebrated and demonstrated in practice, continues to be projected seeking to be crystallized in the community. In this regard, charitable fundraising is a deliberate continuity among the events in Fort Stockton's portfolio no matter what the purpose, the character, and target audiences of each event. For example, education, which is perceived as a major problem in the community, is



often promoted. In particular, event organizers explained about the Dollars for Scholars program, which raises funds for scholarships:

The Dollars for Scholars is a good cause program. When you help children get an education that they normally cannot afford, then you urge as a society every child to go to college. And education does cost a lot of money and if you can help a child at a high school age that might not think of going to college because doesn't have the money is a good influence. An educated community is a better community.

#### **EVENT PORTFOLIO IMPLEMENTATION AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

Event interrelationships illustrate the nature and character of the portfolio and are grounded on what can be described as instrumental connectivity of events in terms of shared objectives and resources, common elements, symbiotic themes and messages as well as conceptual continuities. This kind of instrumental connectivity establishes the semantic context in both thematic and functional terms, thus setting the basis for the organic relatedness in which events complement each other. In this regard, the event interrelationships that organically shape the “informal” event portfolio of Fort Stockton and demonstrate its pragmatic essence are the following: 1) experiential capacity, 2) volunteers pools, and 3) markets.

First of all, experiential capacity refers to the capitalization of existing knowledge and accumulated experience in the organization of events that is transferred to other events in the portfolio. This facilitates the adoption of successful practices in terms of use of resources and utilization of event elements as well as characteristics that influence event production. The involvement and communication of experienced groups and individuals is seminal in the shaping of new events on the basis of successful ones. In this regard, the influence of Water Carnival to other events is demonstrated by the use of common elements, the prominence of the event to the community since 1936, and the

institutionalization of Water Carnival Association where membership includes many families, individuals and the majority of local businesses. In particular, the family character of the event with children who grew up participating in Water Carnival does not only influence other events by transferring the family character to other events but also prepares individuals and groups to acquire the know-how in organizing and staging events. Thus, many organizers of recent events were or are still participants in Water Carnival.

The capitalization on existing knowledge and successful practices is evidenced by event replication. The influence of Harvest Fest is explicit in the new event of Labor Day Weekend Fiesta, which is in essence a mini version of Harvest Fest featuring similar activities such as a car show, sport activities, games, arts and crafts and food booths. Also, the 16 De Septiembre Fiesta features similar activities with the Labor Day Weekend Fiesta and Harvest Fest. The open road races demonstrate replication of a successful race (BBORR) to a second one (RRORR) while there are thoughts for further replicating the races to a new open road motorcycle race. Similarly, the success of the Road Runner Motorcycle Rally led to its replication in 2007 to a motorcycle event named Shining Star of Texas Motorcycle Rally.

Second, event relatedness in the portfolio is characterized by the maintenance of core volunteer pools that provide volunteers for the different events. As an event organizer pointed out: “It is basically the same people who volunteer in events. Some are interested mainly in sports and so they volunteer in sport events. Others prefer to volunteer in events like Water Carnival. Sometimes, though, the cause of an event helps to attract new volunteers.” An event volunteer added:

People have different interest like we have the Water Carnival here and there is a certain group of people that put the thing on and work on it and

most of these people have done it for 20-25 years. They get new people in there to help them and they get into it and they just continue to do it. There are also many other events that people have worked on for many years. It may be the logic of the event or the logic of the sport whatever it may be, people have just different interest and get together working for years in certain events. As they learn to work together in them, they move later to work on other events.

The variety of events provides opportunities for local people with different interest to get involved as volunteers, which is beneficial for maintaining a stable volunteer base for the event portfolio. However, the number of volunteers available is limited. The core of event volunteerism is primarily engendered and maintained in the open road races and Water Carnival, which involve a considerable amount of people who volunteer to help with these events. A concerted effort by community organizations (i.e., Chamber, Churches, Rotary and Lions clubs) that promote collective action towards the accomplishment of a common purpose helps encourage volunteerism throughout the events of the portfolio. As an event organizer pointed out:

We call volunteers to help. A lot of times we need people to help, let's say with Water Carnival, to help with the Pageant and stuff, and we ask people to come and sign up as volunteers. Though we don't have as much as you would think, a lot of the committees that are putting events know where to go to get volunteers. The Chamber and the Rotary Club for example help to locate and attract people to help [volunteers].

Third, the generation of new or complementary markets is accomplished by the different events in the portfolio. The major markets in terms of tourism are the following:

We basically do not focus on only one market. We spread our efforts in every market out there and the only market that we don't consciously go after is the convention market, and that is because we do not have adequate facilities. We basically go after the consumer market, we go after the group-traveling market and we go to travel shows to promote Fort Stockton in cities like Houston, Dallas, Fort Worth, Austin; those are our top markets. El Paso is not really a market, Mexico is definitely not a market.

In the above general markets, events come to target particular segments. Thus, fiestas target local Hispanic audiences. These events are complementary within Fort Stockton's event portfolio offering an assemblage of identical elements and activities that are appealing to Hispanic audiences. Pioneer Days targets students from neighboring area schools, including students from Fort Stockton Middle School such as Odessa, Grandfalls, Midland and Balmorhea. An event organizer pointed out:

Most of the students that come to our field trip, after they talk to their class when they go back to school about something that they learned here. The students are from areas like El Paso, San Angelo, Presidio, so it's a large area that students are coming from. We target 4<sup>th</sup> Grade and 7<sup>th</sup> Grade because they are the ones that have classes in history, so we welcome them anytime here; we also target high school students.

The open road races target a sport tourism segment of drivers that competes in open road car racers. Racers that participate in this event are drivers that come as far away as the West and East Coasts. Also, plenty of Texans from all over the state participate. Another market segment is motorcycle riders, which is targeted with the Motorcycle Road Runner Rally and the new motorcycle rally called Shining Star of Texas, which attracted nearly 400 participants from all over the Permian Basin. Another important market is the sheep-dog handlers, and the Sheep-Dog Trials is an event with national and international appeal. As event organizers explained:

The Sheep-Dog Trials is every January with a lot of dog handlers from all over the US and Europe. The target audience is obviously the dog people. People from Miami may come down here and spend time here to see the trials. I think 3 years ago our entry doubled after one year and the last year we even had to add a portion of a day to accommodate all the dogs.

A common market for all the events in the portfolio is local families. There is a uniform intention imbued in all events to include ancillary activities for the whole family such as games, sports, booths and parties. This homogenizes the gist of different events in the portfolio in terms of developing and maintaining a core set of elements and activities

that appeal to either local or visiting families and the diverse sub-segments of this broad market.

Apart from the described organic relatedness of events in the portfolio, there is also evidence of lack of relationship, which decreases the efficacy of events to serve intended purposes and the portfolio as a whole to operate and be further developed. The individualistic attitude seems to prevail in terms of professional norms and organizational domains. For example, the CVB's official calendar of events does not include events organized by the Recreation Department, the High School's Athletic Department, the Chamber of Commerce or the Hispanic Chamber. A local official explained:

[On the calendar of events the Recreation Department is not listed] because it is a separate entity. This [the events calendar] goes through the CVB, the Tourism Director does this; the Recreation Department is separate. That's the reason the Recreation Department is not in the calendar of events. Because it is a separate entity, it maintains all of its activities going on separately.

Although the CVB supports and sponsors events of the aforementioned agencies, it appears that the lack of understanding about the existence of an event portfolio by local people inhibits the development of a strategic approach and a concerted effort to enhance the planning and implementation of events within a comprehensively intelligible and operational framework of a portfolio. Consequently, events are not strategically viewed as a whole in terms of resource capacity, market demand, accumulated benefits, and employment of tactics, which explains the absence of any effort to cross-leverage events of the portfolio. Similarly, the status of leverage on individual events is based on ad hoc approaches and their potential remains unexplored in the absence of a strategic approach.

In particular, the races represent the most comprehensive leveraging efforts. Economic leverage of the races seeks to foster event visitor spending and towards this objective restaurants and hotels embrace common theming with the races (i.e.,

decorations, welcome racers signs) and promote their services directly to event aficionados (i.e., the event schedule advertises businesses/hotels/gas stations/banks/decorative furniture by having messages “welcome racers, good luck to you all”). The concerted effort is enhanced with the Chamber and the CVB coordinating and encouraging local businesses to do that. However, this tactic is not employed in other events of the portfolio. From a social leverage standpoint, the tactic of theming in the races conveys a sense of an ongoing celebration. Also, in Water Carnival this tactic is present with some local businesses embracing entirely the theming of that year’s show extending thus the celebratory character of the event into the daily life of the community. Moreover, the whole community is invited to participate in the parade and embrace the theme of the show by entering a float in the parade. However, this is not part of a strategy but it rather intuitively happens due to the seminal role of Water Carnival in the community. Theming does not appear to be consistently employed for other events in the portfolio. Event publicity is more strategic for both the races and Water Carnival (and to a lesser degree in Harvest Fest). For example, a local official pointed out:

We do promote some of the big events, we put together special sections like the BBORR; we put together a section that it will have stories about the event. The BBORR with all these people coming out here, the fast cars, and we do stories talking about the race, let people know that it’s coming, let people know about the history of the Fort. And actually in that story we did ask for volunteers to work all along the course.

Event publicity uses narratives to portray the desired of the community as a friendly community with a small-town charm and unique characteristics. This is consistent in the races, Water Carnival and Harvest Fest. However, narratives are not being used for other events in the portfolio. Another aspect of theming is that although each event has its symbols and logo, those are not layered throughout event spaces as well as the places where event attendants congregate.

Strategic efforts that can be construed as economic leverage of events appear to be employed merely by the CVB focusing on tourism revenues from the races. Thus, the economic leverage of the races in addition to fostering event visitor spending through theming, it seeks to lengthen visitor stays through event augmentation aimed to create opportunities for aficionados to share time together from Wednesday through Saturday. Augmentations include welcome parties, pre-race car show and post-race car show, parade, mandatory meetings, party at the park after the race and final banquet. These are designed to provide opportunities for aficionados to come together before and after an event creating social spaces and activities, which celebrate and parade the sub-cultural identity and values of racers. This tactic is not employed for other events in the portfolio (except another event organized by CVB where the period of the Sheep-Dog Trials event was lengthened from two to three days in order to accommodate all participants and increase the amount of time they must stay for the event). The only common tactic among all events in the portfolio is the retention of event spending. Local vendors and especially food booths exist in all events, which serve to maintain event revenues from sales in town. This tactic appears to be embedded in the event planning and implementations as necessity patterned by arrangements and processes due to the economically stressed status of a remote small rural community and its capitalization on recreation and event tourism.

There is potential for the social leverage of Fort Stockton's event portfolio. There is a robust base in the existing practices that facilitate the increase of the social value derived from events. In particular, sociability inside the venue is enabled during Harvest Fest, the Fiestas, Pioneer Days and the Motorcycle Road Runner Rally where attendees are encouraged to arrive early or to stay late (from morning till midnight). Socialization is

enhanced by the design of the parks that have room for people to turn and speak to one another. There are tables around food vendors for people to sit, eat, and talk fostering social interaction. In the BBORR there was a screen in the park next to the food vendors that enabled people to watch the race and fostered interaction. In all of the above events there is plenty of free space, including tables and chairs where people can sit, share food or drink and talk.

Furthermore, sociability beyond the venue is enhanced mainly through event-related social events. For example, during Water Carnival, the public meetings and talks about the town's developments serve as social gathering points. The school reunions, which are scheduled during the Water Carnival, create an opportunity for participating in the parade, dinners, and meetings where sociability and reconnection of the community are fostered. In the races, there are mandatory meetings for drivers, and volunteers. Also, the parties in the park and the car show create social mixers for participants and attendees. This is a means to enable event participants and attendees to meet and socialize. Pioneer days featured a Silent Auction offering free food and drinks the day before the event started in order to raise funds and create a space for social interaction.

The organization of ancillary events increases the social value of the event portfolio. For example, Harvest Fest includes vernacular music performances of local bands and musicians as well as a number of other staged activities. The car shows in the races, Harvest Fest and Labor Day Fiesta provide opportunities for social interaction and sociability. The parades in Water Carnival, 16 Septiembre Fiesta and the racers amplify a sense of celebration. What appears to be missing is the employment of a strategic approach to create liminality and amplify the array of social benefits throughout the event portfolio. Similarly, joint strategies could be employed for the economic and social



leverage of the event portfolio replacing the current ad hoc actions. The emphasis on tourism is the driving force for the proliferation of events in the community and guarantees the legitimization of efforts for the economic and social development of Fort Stockton. The issue for event organizers and local policy-makers is the employment of joint strategies for the attainment and magnification of specific ends.

Tourism is inextricably part of the community's endeavor to revitalize local economy and improve the quality of life in Fort Stockton. Most of the events that attract visitation feature sport or include sport as an ancillary activity to their program. Sport appears to be integrated into the community's conscience as a form of performance and spectation, enacted on its own or along with cultural performances. Tourism is also integrated and is sought as an alternative to diversify the local economy. Thus, sport or cultural events aimed to attract visitation are incorporated into the policy purposes of local governance. This guides the integration of events with the overall mix of Fort Stockton's products and services. Since the focus of the policy purposes concerns the increase of tourism revenues and improvement of quality of life it is helpful to view community and tourism development under the same scope.

On this basis, each event in the portfolio according to its particular characteristics derives the aforementioned benefits, which in many instances overlap. Hence, an event serves dual purposes. In particular, Water Carnival celebrates identity but also attracts visitation. Similarly, Harvest Fest including sport as an ancillary activity celebrates economy and attracts visitors. Likewise, the Fiestas include sport games to celebrate Hispanic heritage and attract Hispanic visitors from neighboring communities. Pioneer Days, which includes archetypical games attracts schools as visitors. The BBORR, the RRORR and the Motorcycle Road Runner Rally demonstrate that Fort Stockton is a

vibrant, sociable community and attract the respective subcultures as tourists. Finally, High School Football offers a social stage for interaction and brings as tourists the visiting teams. As local people express, all the events provide opportunities for recreation, enhancing social interaction, projecting Fort Stockton as a vibrant town, and “a nice place to live and raise children.” While attracting visitors through events and entice their spending is essential, local people recognize that the different events provide them with opportunities to work on a number of projects that they are interested in. For example, a resident pointed out:

I get involved in a lot of things. Fort Stockton has a variety of events to offer everybody. Because some people don't have any interest in the car races for example but they are very interested in the Water Carnival. So you always have some things that somebody will be interested in regardless of whether that would be a Healthcare Fair, whether that would be children's activities, or activities for the elderly, there is always something you can do in Fort Stockton. So if that is your interest, if that is the cause you believe in then you can get involved.

In terms of event and tourism marketing, despite that there is not a strategic approach, the event portfolio demonstrates that Fort Stockton is a vibrant, eventful town and although it is not a destination per se, it may attract visitors who pass through Fort Stockton to attend some of the events. For this reason, events are integrated with the community's tourism attractions and service mix. As an example, the Tourism Department encourages “adventure cruises” (optional tours of the area), which are included in the schedule of the event for the racers, on Friday morning from 8:00 to 12:00 before the event commences. Most importantly, information is provided about local restaurant and hotels and tourism attractions are referred in events' programs. The brochure of the Water Carnival's program, which has all the information about that year's production and the history of the event is distributed to all hotels and restaurants in town so that visitors can be enticed to attend the event.

Overall, there are three archetypal (proto)-strategies in terms of the grounding logic that events are used in the portfolio. First, events are used as focal practices. This entails that events provide symbolic social spaces for the whole community to share common values, celebrate identity, create or enhance social capital and build a local cultural ideology. Water Carnival, High School Football and Harvest Fest are focal practices. These events have an endogenous social role but due to their salience have also the capacity to attract visitors. Second, events are used as features. This entails a primary social role of these events for segments of the community meaning that their appeal is not widely embraced. These come to complement the events as focal practices giving alternative opportunities for expression and entertainment. The segmented nature of these events might attract visitors who are affiliated with the theme or organizers of the event. Also, these events serve as a recreational opportunity for those who pass by or visit Fort Stockton. These events are the Pioneer Days, the Fiestas, concerts and sport tournaments. Third, events are used as attractions. These are the events that reach distinct target markets as tourists since the event is the only reason for their visit to Fort Stockton. The Races, Sheep-Dog Trials and the Motorcycle Rally are the events as attractions.

From an operational standpoint, the implementation of Fort Stockton's portfolio of events depends on the following factors: material and human resources available in the community, market demand for events, competition for event attendance among diverse events and contingency happenstances. Most importantly, a critical factor is that event planning and implementations are embedded in the patterns of social relations, structures and processes of the community. This drives operational decisions about individual events that in turn shape the overall portfolio of events. Such decisions are currently a

matter of individual initiative and concern the frequency of events, their timely placement, reach, and formality.

In terms of frequency, an event organizer explained: “The frequency of our events and the rationale behind them is that people get to know when an event is gonna be but that it is not so often so that they are not tired of coming to it.” Another local official added: “To make sure that there is plenty of activities offered. A lot of people go on vacations especially in the summer, so we wanted to make sure that when they happened to be on vacation they didn’t miss opportunities for participation in events.”

The timely placement of events is a constant concern for event organizers. What is primarily taken into consideration are weather conditions, preferences of audiences and prevention to exhaust the human resources. For example, event organizers explained:

When we started the Road Race, it was actually the first week of April and there was horrible weather, so we changed it. The racing series is something else: you have to see when the other races take place. So when we started that race we actually became so straight with the season, which is April. There were other racers who were asking to do an October race and so we decided to do it, which makes the chart for the entire season. And the other thing, the Harvest Fest was in August for eight years, we set it basically that time of the year as an event after harvest to celebrate winery; then one year we had a lot of complaints to move it to October but the next year the attendance was not good. In the meantime we decided to do another race. We could not have two major events in October, this would exhaust us, so the Harvest Fest event went back to September.

The reach of events is intended to appeal to the target markets that are perceived by the community as potential audiences including primarily segments of local people and tourism markets. Thus, each event seeks to reach and capture the interest of sub-segments of the above generic markets. Another operational decision is the formalization of events, which moves to institutionalize seminal events like Water Carnival. This is a result of standard procedures that are put in place in order to ensure the unproblematic implementation of events and their appeal to audiences. This engenders a homogeneity of

event characteristics in the portfolio such as formality of event implementations, intentionality that defines the purposes of events, replicability that drives the adoption or mimicry of successful event elements and whole events, polysemy that fosters symbolic meanings as well as multiple interpretations, and connectivity that links and reinforces those meanings throughout different events in the portfolio. This facilitates the fit of different events in the portfolio although there is not a conscious or coordinated approach to match or harmonize the different events and their characteristics in the portfolio.

However, the operation of Fort Stockton's event portfolio faces a two-fold challenge. The first aspect concerns the increasing number of events within the portfolio and the declining participation evident in events such as Harvest Fest, Pioneer Days and the Fiestas. As local people state: "There are so many events going on in the community that it's hard to attend them all." Although the events intend to attract visitors the basis of attendance and participation are local people. If this basis is declining and does not have an interest on a specific event, that event might cease to exist. Also, despite the fact that there is an effort to co-ordinate the timely placement of events so that there are not conflicts between events happening at the same time, which could cause cannibalization in event consumption and participation, it appears that even a close placement of events (i.e., one or two weeks after) may cause decline in participation considering the small population of Fort Stockton. For example, the Labor Day Weekend Fiesta was placed closely after Harvest Fest and the limited participation may also be explained on this basis. Similarly, in the same day of the 16 De Septiembre Fiesta there was also a Community Health Fair and a softball tournament. An event organizer pointed out regarding another event (Sheep-Dog Trials) that has limited attendance from local

people: “It’s really never been an event that draws all of the public out there and besides until it’s over it conflicts sometimes with other events in town.”

It appears that it is currently uncertain what should be the ideal number of events to include in Fort Stockton’s portfolio from a market demand perspective. A local official pointed out:

There is a very delicate balance in the number of special events the community hosts. Whether it is too much, whether there are too many events, I think we are approaching that point. We have the Harvest Fest, the Road Race, other various sporting events and as far as the new motorcycle race, that could be maybe too much. Who knows? I guess you arrive at a point where you lose your attraction by the commonality. And so are we there yet? I don’t know.

The success of Fort Stockton’s events still prompts the proliferation of events in the community. Functionalism prevails with the need to attract more visitors and tourism revenues to the community through events. Thus, new events have been created without considering market saturation. It would be interesting, for example, to estimate demand for current and future events. That way, the community could decide what events appeal to local people, which ones attract visitation and decide whether or not they should include new events in the portfolio. The advantage of attracting participants and audiences through multiple events is that the community reaches diverse target audiences engendering new markets. However, it appears that the events share many common elements and there is a repetitiveness of the same or similar activities throughout different events. While this seems to be successful in the short-term because people enjoy the common activities, it is possible, that in the long-term, changes of event elements will be necessary because local people may become bored with repetitiveness. The conceptual fit of events should always be considered; however, not at the expense of novelty and variation.

The second aspect deals with the increasing uncertainty relative to the ideal number of events included in Fort Stockton's portfolio this time from a resource usage perspective. There is a point where there starts to be an apparent exhaustion of local resources necessary to host events, especially the person power and volunteer base. It is unclear what is the maximum capacity of the community's resources to host events effectively and efficiently. The challenge here is to maintain local interest to get involved and help in the organization of multiple events without overloading or even burn them out with demand for excessive volunteer work in multiple events. As a local official emphasized:

It's gonna be constant balance to keep people interested. The big thing is the community itself. The volunteer base is the big help for anything we do. If we get the community disinterested or disenchanted with any of the events, we're gonna have a problem. So that's the big challenge: it's to keep the whole community involved. Not just the governmental agencies but the big support that comes from the whole community.

Overall, Fort Stockton is a small community with a limited market of event patrons and resource capacity. In order to fully exploit the benefits of the event portfolio, while minimizing any unintended consequences, the equilibrium in the number of events should be sought. The event portfolio, as it is now, seems to be an integral and undivided part of the community. As a resident pointed out:

If you took out some of the events in the community, it would put a void in the community. This goes back to community pride; we are a small community but we have pride in our community. There are a lot of different events and a lot of people put the effort to make those projects a success. This helps the community and people feel good about themselves. They can go to other communities and compare their activities with our events and feel proud of what we achieve.

## **CONCLUDING REMARKS**

Fort Stockton's event portfolio is an eclectic assemblage of sport and cultural performances, collective imaginary and thematic preoccupations of the community that are presented as suitable for spectatorship. The thematic interrelationships among different events enhance their meaning and their apparent instrumental connectivity bolsters the capacity of each event to serve multiple purposes. Thematic continuities among events in the portfolio reaffirm and establish the projected meta-messages within and outside the community. A conceptual synergy lies at the core of each event, which translates to community identity, civic esteem, economic benefit and quality of life. Under this prism events in Fort Stockton are utilized concurrently for economic and community development addressing the problems that a remote and small rural community faces.

In this regard, the event portfolio responds to the ongoing public discourse amplifying a sense of celebration wherein social interaction is engendered. However, in order for the events to be appropriate for presentation, not only to others, but also to local people, it is required that the selection of themes and corresponding social issues be regarded as both credible and safe in the cultural context of the community. This is because they may shape in important ways the sort of local identity and social capital, which in turn, reaffirms the social order of the community. As evidenced by the events that have been examined, the safe issues for Fort Stockton are community involvement and collective effort, self-proclaimed identity and image, sociability, and education. The underlying esoteric logic behind these issues is that in a free-market driven economy competition should be controlled so that displays of self-interest do not produce serious dissension within the community. In other words, as the High School Football and Water Carnival demonstrate, individual actors as competitors must be able to stand on their own



feet but as neighbors they should be sociable and obliging to cooperation. In contrast, the unsafe issues that are being avoided for presentation in events concern the nature and effect of the distribution of economic and political power and the significance of race, religion and class as determining domestic relationships. There seems to be no occasion for addressing these issues in events and thus reflexivity on these issues is precluded.

The events define Fort Stockton's identity as unique in the West Texas context and do so in terms of what the community has come to regard competition and cooperation. This fosters a dynamic view of both the past and the present. By their focus on community and economic purposes, the events draw attention to problems that are of current and threatening significance. By presenting the community as robust and pioneering through the episodically coherent mirror of an event portfolio, each of the events brings recognition to Fort Stockton and seeks to alleviate the existing vulnerability of a rural isolated region. Therefore, with the event portfolio, the people of Fort Stockton present a particular image of themselves to the world as continuing to embody truths that became manifest in West Texas. By establishing a community in which relatively autonomous individuals work together, they demonstrate that, like their predecessors, they still have a creative and significant role in West Texas and that they still hold the pioneering spirit.

## **Chapter 7: Inter-Organizational Linkages**

Events are planned and implemented by single organizations or civic groups, but often their success depends on the level of support from informal arrangements within a community and the contribution of a number of individual actors. The formal and informal relationships among organizations as well as other groups, is what shapes the events and their potential to be used for achieving policy purposes. In the case of an event portfolio, these relationships are intertwined within a complex network of organizing entities, supporting public sector bodies, businesses, voluntary groups and community alliances.

This sort of inter-organizational linkages in event hosting is evident in Fort Stockton despite the fact that it is a small rural community. For example, the major community entities that organize or are involved in hosting events are the following: Chamber of Commerce, Tourism Department, Recreation Department, Fort Stockton High School, Library, Extension Office, Historic Fort Stockton Museum, Annie Riggs Museum, Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Pro Shop, Precinct 1, and Arts & Crafts Association. These entities, in many cases, work together to organize events, and the nature of this cooperation is determined by the City Council, the County Council or the School District policies since most of the aforementioned entities are under the arm of the City, the County or the School.

In other words, event stakeholders interact with the policy universe of the community that consists of formal organizations. The result of this interaction shapes the context for attaining outcomes that derive from events. Collaboration is the key in this process for mobilizing community resources and creating synergies to host events

effectively and efficiently. The institutional structures and the policies of formal organizations set up the basis for this collaboration to happen.

In order to shed light on the inter-organizational framework of Fort Stockton's event portfolio, the structural context of formal organizations hosting and supporting events is analyzed. Further, the factors that facilitate or impede collaboration toward the incorporation of events into the economic and social development are identified and explained. Finally, a network analysis is undertaken envisaging Fort Stockton's informal special event network in order to evaluate community capacity to capitalize effectively on its event portfolio.

### **THE STRUCTURAL CONTEXT**

In Fort Stockton there is a distinctive institutional framework that determines the formal inter-organizational relationships. This is the governmental partnership among the City Council, the County Council and the Independent School District. General policy responsibilities and areas of control are determined within this framework, which has implications for the organization of events such as common usage of resources. In the context of an event portfolio where multiple organizations are involved with the organizations of different events it seems that the governmental partnership is critical in bringing together the respective organizations that belong under the arm of the County, the City and the School District. In a nutshell, it seems that it creates formal and informal synergies among different entities that organize sport and special events.

In particular, the Chamber of Commerce seems to be at the central position being related with most organizations. The Tourism Department which is under the arm of the City oversees the two museums of the community. The Recreation Department seems

also to be in a central position since it is being funded from the City, the School and the County. Hence, the Recreation Department is a major recipient of support and local resources. On these grounds it is potentially able to develop relationships with the School's Athletic Department, the Tourism Department, the Chamber and the Library. The Athletic Department seems to be isolated and organizes most of the events on its own. Similarly, the Hispanic Chamber is isolated having little relations with the rest of organizations. The Library which is funded by the County seems to have relationships with other organizations, although not strong. The Extension Office seems also to have weak or no relationships with most of the organizations in hosting special events. The most important entities and actors are analyzed below in order to comprehend the inter-organizational fabric of the community as it pertains to the event portfolio.

## **The City**

The mission of the City of Fort Stockton municipal government is to promote value, public confidence and trust by the accountable and responsible use of community resources; to ensure public safety; improve public services; promote local recreation and entertainment; and generate economic development (Official website of the City of Fort Stockton, 2007). The City Council appoints the following boards:

- |                                  |                                      |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| • Animal Control Advisory Board  | Beautiful Board                      |
| • Cemetery Board                 | • Planning & Zoning Commission Board |
| • Community Development Board    | • Board of Adjustment                |
| • Quality Assurance Board        | • Recreation Board                   |
| • Historical Landmark Commission | • Convention & Visitors Bureau Board |
| • Housing Authority Board        | • Main Street Advisory Board         |
| • Keep Historic Fort Stockton    | • Economic Development Board         |

The City Council is predominantly Hispanic reflecting the population composition of Fort Stockton. The City Council funds and oversees the Tourism

Department, the Recreation Department, the Annie Riggs and Historic Fort museums. It also works closely with the Chamber, the Economic Development Corporation and funds programs of the Library.

### **The County**

The Pecos County Council is divided into four precincts and it is critical for events because it owns facilities such as Rooney and Nunez parks, and most of the outdoor sport fields in town. The County Council takes care of the park and facilities through the Precincts, which are responsible maintaining the facilities in their areas. The County does not charge fees for the use of facilities. A local official pointed out:

The County is divided into four precincts and each Commissioner is somewhat responsible solely for his own precinct. What we do is coordinate with each other and help each other during special events, whatever services they might need help with, if they need some extra employee, if they need some help in preparation and so on.

The County funds the Library and the Recreation Department and also supports the events organized by those two entities. The major focus of the County Council is the maintenance and development of recreational spaces and facilities. In particular, a local official pointed out:

The County is very forward thinking in terms of looking to the future and trying to build new facilities such as baseball fields and so forth. There are plans being made to come up with new recreational facilities for youth baseball, for girls' softball, for men's softball as far as it goes and trying to attract more tourism so to speak.

### **The Library**

The Library is under the arm of the County Council. The City also supports the Library financially. It subsidizes it annually with an amount of about \$7,000 to support the programs and services of the Library. While the School District and the Library are

trying to help each other out, with the material that the School District needs like books there is not an official support network between the two entities.

The Library plays a central role in the town's life serving different functions in the community. During the summer it maintains the Summer Reading Club, which helps children to improve their reading skills. The Library also offers arts and cultural activities such as concerts and arts classes. Thus, the role of the Library in the community is primarily educational and recreational. The Library seeks to develop programs and services that will contribute to the education of children during their leisure time. In a rural community where there are not many places for recreation, the Library is a space where the youth and adults can access educational resources and spend their leisure time.

A local official explained the activities of the Library:

The Library serves a lot of different functions in the community. During the summer it maintains the Summer Reading Club, which helps the kids improve their reading skills throughout the summer. The Library offers arts and cultural activities, concerts, arts classes, small events for the community to come and hang out, and the public Internet computers, which are free for anybody, travelers, whoever. In terms of programming every month there are events and activities for children so that they have something to do. Also, the Library informs the community and provides activities for all the people to participate in.

All events, services and programs offered by, and attended by the Library are designed to support its mission statement to provide quality materials and services in a variety of formats, which fulfill the educational, informational, cultural, and recreational needs of the entire community. A local official pointed out:

All the events [of the Library] intend to support the mission of the Library to be a center of learning, leisure, education for the community. Then specific goals of events are set such as a reading or arts/crafts, which have a specific purpose to introduce the community something that they never thought that they could do before.

Each event, service or program is planned in hopes of reaching larger audiences and increase Library use and visits. In this regard, the frequency of the events organized by the Library is at least every month, and during the summer every week or sometimes twice or three times a week, in order to make sure that there are plenty of activities offered. In addition, the Library seeks to help and participate in the special events organized by other entities in order to reflect that the Library is an active, involved part of the community and provides activities for it. The events that the Library has been involved include the Pecos County Health Fair, Big Bend Open Road Race, Harvest Fest, Christmas and 4<sup>th</sup> of July parades. A local official pointed out:

The Library has in the past been at the Big Bend Open Road Race, it was at the park doing stage times and puppet shows for the kids. The Library went to the Harvest Fest out at the park also doing the same thing. During the 4<sup>th</sup> of July festivities the Library has a reading club for the kids. Every year there is a Health Fair showing people materials that the Library has related to health, so that the Library can support the education in that.

### **The Chamber of Commerce**

The Fort Stockton Chamber of Commerce has a central role in the organization of events. Its mission as defined by its board is twofold: to promote and encourage the business development of the City of Fort Stockton and the surrounding area; and to use all practical and available resources to improve and enhance the quality of life of all citizens of the area. The Fort Stockton Chamber of Commerce has been running since the March of 1920. In response to community and market conditions the Chamber continues to change and reshape its goals in order to adequately meet the needs of the membership and community.

The Chamber is critical in creating and enhancing linkages for inter-organizational cooperation within the community. It works with many agencies not only

for economic reasons but also for community purposes. The Chamber's community involvement entails the functions of being informant of community development and activities, advocate for highway/railway transportation development, ensuring a quality place to live in terms of housing, leisure, infrastructure, and schools. It is a major player in shaping and mediating local government relations and helps to plan Workforce Development programs with the Independent School District, and Permian Basin Workforce Commission. Also, the Chamber hosts an annual banquet recognizing outstanding volunteers in the community in an effort to promote volunteerism and collective action. It works with the School District and the Recreation Department in bringing in events and encouraging more economic growth through sport events. The Chamber also supports many community sponsored events such as the Sheep-Dog Trials, Big Bend and Road Runner Open Road Races, Water Carnival, Pioneer Days, Christmas Activities, Harvest Fest, Health and Safety Expo, and others, helping with the marketing promotion and coordinated integration of the events with the community's overall product and service mix.

Currently, the Fort Stockton Chamber's membership is 250 members with each member having the opportunity to vote on a Board of Directors. In turn, the board of Directors volunteer their time to set policies, create a vision, oversee the finance, establish guidelines for the staff and assist in special projects, committees and task forces. This creates a considerable response by the Chamber to the problems that Fort Stockton faces. In particular, as business and community problems arise, the board and staff establish specific task forces and committees to accomplish certain goals. The common thread that permeates throughout each committee and project is based on the grounds of economic and community development. Local officials support the Chamber by



establishing every committee strives to create more economic benefits for the groups of businesses and to improve the social welfare of Fort Stockton (Appendix D lists all the committees established by the Chamber). Within the Chamber there are three divisions that address the community and business needs:

**Economic Development Division.** The purpose of this division is to oversee and direct the business development and job creation activities of the Chamber, in accordance with the Economic Development Plan adopted by the Fort Stockton Economic Development Corporation. The areas of work are the following: New Membership Recruitment and Retention, Shop Locally Campaign, Shop Locally Billboard, Newspaper Page/Publicity, Website/Master Community Calendar, Job Training, and Business Retention.

**Community Development Division.** The purpose of this division is to ensure channeling the resources of the Chamber toward continued efforts in enhancing the quality of life of the citizens of Fort Stockton. This division is responsible for organizing special events or working together with other entities to help in the organization of events. The areas of work are the following: Home Improvement Show, Holiday Glitz, Job Fair/Workforce, 4th of July, Concert in the Park Series, Banquet, and Shopping Nights. The events organized by this division of the Chamber come to complement the major events of Fort Stockton's portfolio and provide further recreational opportunities. Holiday Glitz for example is a fashion show that features local people's most eccentric and avant-garde outfits, while the 4<sup>th</sup> of July event features a parade and other celebratory activities for the Independence Day. In terms of event organization and inter-organizational cooperation it is important that this division has a special events

committee, which is responsible for organizing the Chambers' aforementioned events and also cooperating with other entities in the organization of other events in the community.

**Organizational Development Division.** The purpose of this division is to place a strong emphasis on service and communications to the entire membership and pursue efforts to increase the total members of the Fort Stockton Chamber of Commerce. The areas of work are After Hours Social, Membership Breakfast, Christmas Open House, Silent Auction, Youth Leadership, Leadership Fort Stockton/Alumni, Ambassadors, and Women's Divisions. Volunteerism is also an important part of this division's work. It focuses on developing plans for volunteer training, education, and recruitment. This is critical for the event portfolio because it helps to engender and maintain volunteer pools that will support the array of events. In terms of setting the ground of inter-organizational cooperation the division's following programs and committees are important:

**Youth Leadership.** The Fort Stockton Chamber of Commerce sponsors Youth Leadership Fort Stockton. This program is designed to expose future leaders of the community to Fort Stockton and the opportunities available in Fort Stockton and Pecos County. The program promotes an awareness of Fort Stockton's history, resources, and potential with a mind toward motivating and developing Fort Stockton's future leaders. It is also designed to assist local youth with leadership potential to provide positive influence on their peers concerning the community and provide an opportunity to create positive interaction among youth of all area high schools. This is also designed to influence youth to stay in the Fort Stockton area, to return upon completion of their education, or to become active citizens in the community. The foci of the training session are Leadership Skills, Local Economy, Economic Development, Education, Community

Service, Career, and Investments. Within this context, interaction of event participants and their exposure to the community issues is promoted. Also, collaboration toward resolving these issues is taught to the future leaders of the community.

**Leadership Fort Stockton Alumni Association.** The mission of this committee is to promote continuance, guidance, and development of Leadership Fort Stockton program for adults in order to improve and develop the leadership skills of individuals. The Alumni Association continues education and leadership training for its members. The membership consists of all individuals who have successfully completed the Leadership Fort Stockton program. The Leadership Fort Stockton program recruits new class participants who are interested in community leading positions. The curriculum of each upcoming Leadership Fort Stockton program is overseen and developed by the alumni. The complete program is designed to assist the class participants in team building, leadership skills, confidence building, and communication skills. Apart from producing effective leaders for Fort Stockton, this program brings aspiring adult individuals together to develop their skills and collaborate in order to improve the life of the community.

**Chamber Ambassadors.** The Ambassadors are dedicated volunteers from businesses throughout Fort Stockton. They act as liaison between the Chamber and its member businesses. The focus of the Fort Stockton Chamber Ambassadors is to support and actively participate in the goals and action plans established by the Board of Directors, to welcome and involve existing members through participation in Chamber sponsored events and recruit as well as nurture new Chamber members. They are seen as goodwill representatives of the Chamber.

Ambassadors visit new members to encourage involvement in the many programs offered by the Chamber. They greet everyone at social functions, making them feel welcome. Ambassadors participate in Ribbon Cuttings, Grand Openings and Ground Breaking Ceremonies for Chamber member businesses, and monthly Ambassador Luncheons. Fort Stockton Chamber Ambassadors always represent the Chamber in a professional manner whether it is at the Chamber Annual Banquet, After Hour Socials, or at Economic Development functions. A member of the Ambassadors' committee explained: "The Chamber Ambassadors is a volunteer service organization. We have been selected to represent the Chamber of Commerce in our community and at Chamber sponsored events because of our commitment to and involvement in the Chamber."

The Ambassadors have a critical role in events because they act as a liaison between the Chamber and event organizing entities. They link the economic and community development divisions of the Chamber with all the event organizers. They are a constant in the organization of various events within Fort Stockton's portfolio. Therefore, they are agents promoting and enabling inter-organizational co-operation within the community in event hosting. They are involved with all the major community events. In Water Carnival they greet visitors and sell tickets, in Harvest Fest they serve and sell wine, in BBORR they greet racers, and in Pioneer Days they help with the fund-raising silent auction to support the Historic Fort and museum. A member of the Ambassadors pointed out about the essence of their role in the community:

We greatly value our Ambassadors and consider their role important to our mission of creating opportunities for commerce and community and this is a huge commitment for volunteers. However, our organization is fortunate enough to have individuals from our business community who believe in the value of business-building-business. We also feel an obligation as community leaders to devote our time, knowledge, and experience to work for continued development and the prosperity of member businesses in Fort Stockton.

## **The Economic Development Corporation**

The Economic Development Corporation (EDC) works closely with the Chamber and is housed in the same building. While it is officially out of its scope to assist in the organization of events, it is involved with other departments and entities that organize events for economic benefits. It helps by officially sponsoring some events, and with various aspects of their organization. A local official explained:

The EDC is not tasked by the State Legislature to be capable of spending money on events. We can spend money on infrastructure for events but we cannot spend money for sales and advertising. We work very closely with the CVB and we collaborate on a lot of projects. We had a symposium here in the Spring for Rural Economic Development, we did another one this summer and we collaborated on those. We brought people from the region to learn about economic development. A good example of how we help in the events is the Sheep Dog Trials that we have on January; we bring people from outside the community, and also we help during the event, for instance I bring big sheep since 6:00 in the morning, and such kind of things. Also, when we do a joint event, we designate specific tasks, and I might be in charge of sponsoring a meal and making sure that the registration is alright and the other party will be in charge of staffing. It is a very collaborative effort, we work very well on that.

## **The Tourism Department and the Museums**

The Tourism Department is the primary organizer of events that bring tourists to Fort Stockton. Harvest Fest, Sheep-Dog Trials and the Open Road Races are organized by the Tourism Department. Since there is an intention of the community to capitalize on tourism development and use events for economic benefit, the CVB is very active and constantly strives to promote activities that entice visitors to spend money in Fort Stockton. Hence, the CVB participates and supports other major events such as the Water Carnival and Pioneer Days, and co-sponsors smaller events such as Concerts in the Park with the Chamber, sport events with the Recreation Department and the Fiestas with the Hispanic Chamber. The tactic of CVB is to integrate events with the community's overall service and product mix.

The Tourism Department works closely with the Chamber, which has a Tourism coordinator reporting to the Tourism Department. In particular, a local official explained:

The Chamber's job is basically to run the visitors center and that's why they are more centrally located where the most of the tourists are going to come in and they want travel information, etc. There is a tourism coordinator in the Chamber who is under CVB; her job is main street - it's a state project where we want to revitalize the main street area back to what was many years ago, bring shopping back to town; and with the Executive Director of the Chamber are working together.

Fort Stockton features two museums as the major tourism attractions in the community. Historic Fort Stockton is the landmark of the community featuring the grounds of the old fort, a museum and a visitor area. It organizes the Pioneer Days event and other smaller events such as Christmas at the Fort. The Annie Riggs museum also organizes small-scale events such as the Concerts Off the Patio series. Both museums share resources and seem to cooperate when they organize events. They are funded by the CVB and plan their activities in unison with the Tourism Department. In particular, a local official explained:

The Director of Tourism oversees any of the tourism methods for all: advertising, marketing, promotions, anything that is poster-related, brochure-related, travel shows, conventions, co-op marketing. Locally the Museum and the Fort are related with CVB: their job is to be the attraction; as part of CVB's job is to promote people going to attractions. So I don't see that the CVB is over them, I tend to see us all together. The CVB has its position with the City and they both receive some money from the CVB budget and we work all together.

### **The Recreation Department**

The Fort Stockton Recreation Department offers residents of all ages, access to participation in a wide variety of sport activities. The Department has recently moved to a new building converting a former school to a recreational facility. This has enhanced its ability to supply additional services to the community. The youth can participate in baseball, soccer, football, and basketball. There are adult leagues for softball, baseball

and football. The Recreation Department also supplies access to facilities for tennis, basketball, volleyball, aerobics, racquetball, weight training, boxing and swimming. The Recreation Department also manages the Teen Center, which is designed to be a safe and fun gathering place for the community's youth. The Teen Center hosts dances and social events for Fort Stockton's young people, and supplies them with a supervised gathering place for after-school activities.

The Recreation Department is funded by the City, the County and the School. This enables it to develop programs and organize events in collaboration with all these entities and their affiliated departments. A local official explained how this process works in practice:

The Recreation Department's operating budget is made up from the City, the School, and the County. The County and the City give an equal amount of funding and then the School District gives \$25,000, but they provide all of the facilities, and they don't designate it "if your skin is black you can't come," it's open to the community. And that's why the office of the Recreation Department is inside the School and all the activities of the recreation program are in the School again. The County owns the parks, little play fields, and baseball fields that are used [by the recreation Department]. The City also has parks and they contribute a tremendous amount of financial support; they do all the payroll and budgeting. So it's really a unique situation and it is successful. I know that if you go to other communities you will find that this does not exist. I know by talking to people when they come to play softball or baseball, they have no fields because the County wants it this way, the City wants it this way, and nobody can get along, nobody agrees to do anything and it is left to the coaches, which makes it very hard. Here we don't have that.

The growth and success of the Recreation Program in Fort Stockton constitutes a paradigm for sport development in the U.S. where the fragmentation between professional sport and recreation has left the numerous park and recreational facilities underutilized. It means that the use of sporting facilities which belong to different entities needs to be coordinated securing access to everyone, and sport and recreation need to be included in the policy domain of economic and social development. This could be a way

to safeguard sport development. Fort Stockton's Recreation Department is closely linked and actively involved with the community's economic and social development. A local official explained the vision of the Department, which coincides with the town's effort to enhance the quality of life:

To make sure that all people of all ages have an opportunity to participate in something. The Recreation Department has lots of activities for young and old people to participate. For example, there are swimming lessons out in the swimming pool, there are exercise classes for women who stay at home or for ladies that work.

The Recreation Department being an organizer of many small sport events in the community has to be careful with the scheduling of events so that they do not happen at the same time. Coordination is a key factor in the success of events in order to avoid conflicting timing. To achieve coordination, communication and sharing information with other agencies about the events they are hosting is essential. In this regard, the opportune placement of events in the portfolio is a critical task especially when sport and cultural events are organized in a parallel timeframe. A local official explained this by making reference to an example:

We had the Family Play Day planned for the 11<sup>th</sup> but we realized that the Relay for Life was on the 10<sup>th</sup> and it would be impossible to get a good group of people to come to the Family Play Day because they will be so tired because they stayed up all night, and we would not have any participation. So we changed it, so we can draw from the community; we changed the date of the Family Play Day from the 11<sup>th</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup>. There would be no way, it would be too much. The community works together, so they don't overbook or they don't try to have too many activities because if they do, it will be a failure. So we are very coordinated to make sure that these activities are not overlapping. Also, they tried to have an adult Softball Tournament and they called me and I said "We have the kids Softball Tournament, there is no way that we can have both of these at the same time because of the same facilities," so they said "Okay, we'll draw it back." We truly try to coordinate so that we won't fail. That happens because, I think, we are small; we are able to do that because we have the same people.



Inter-organizational cooperation is facilitated by the small size of the community. Personal contact through informal friendship networks can inform and assist the hosting of events. Individual leadership is also critical in maintaining or establishing inter-organizational relationships in events. For sport events, the Recreation Department strives to prioritize the timely hosting of the event and the supply of volunteers to help in order for an event to be successful. As a local official stated, the logic of the Department in avoiding failure in event organization is the following: “An event will fail if too many other events are going on, there are not enough volunteers, or the person who is organizing the event could not get any help from other people.”

The Recreation Department takes full advantage of the school facilities to organize sport events. There is apparently close cooperation between the Independent School District and the Recreation Department. This synergy is explained as follows:

We work closely with the School so that we have the children and the adults come to the Recreation [programs], so it's not just for a certain group of people; it's for everybody in the community. And that's where sports come in particularly with children. If you go to other communities of our size, their Recreation Department is zero; they don't have the funding, they don't have the cooperation, they don't have the power to make it grow for the community. And there is a power struggle “I want this, I want this, I want this” instead of let's do it for the community. And as you see, we have an unbelievable amount of sports activities going on in Fort Stockton, and we will not schedule an event here at Recreation if something is going on with the School because we have to use the same participants; if they have a band concert at the School and we have a Baseball or Softball game scheduled, it will be rescheduled because the children need to go to the concert. When there is a test for all students by the State of Texas, we will not have any activity scheduled that whole week, so that children can do well on the test. It is working together; I think that is what is so important: the will to make a great community for families to live so that children have something to participate in.

### **The Fort Stockton Independent School District**

The School District is comprised of six campuses, administrative offices and a maintenance facility. There are excellent educational and recreational facilities for the

high-school, middle and elementary schools. There is an effort to have high quality schools in order to attract families in town who would like to raise their children in a small community. Thus, the school system functions as a central town amenity, which enhances the quality of life in terms of education, learning and future prospects for the children as well as providing activities/events, which bring students and parents together. The quality of the schools serves as a marketing tool to attract people to move to Fort Stockton.

The High School has extensive sporting facilities (i.e., football stadium, tennis courts, practice fields and indoor basketball as well as volleyball courts). In terms of inter-organizational cooperation the School District provides complementary funding and access to all its facilities to the Recreation Department, works closely with the Library and the Extension Office to host educational events as well as with the Chamber to promote the School, its programs, services and events. The cooperative effort of the County, the City and the School is demonstrated by the decision to support education through the passage of bond elections for new schools, improvements and expansion of existing structures and up to date extracurricular activity facilities. For example, in 1999, the community approved a \$13,790,000 bond issue for the construction of a new Alamo Elementary School, the Bill & Virginia Williams Special Events Center, and upgrades/repairs to all other Campuses in the district.

The Fort Stockton High School's Athletic Department organizes teams and events for the following sports: Boys and Girls Golf, Boys and Girls Tennis, Boys and Girls Track, Boys and Girls Power-lifting, Boys and Girls Swimming, Boys and Girls Cross Country, Boys and Girls Basketball, Baseball, Softball, Volleyball and Football. Since 2000, Texas State Championships were earned in Girls Golf, Boys Tennis and Power

Lifting, with state qualifiers in Track, Team Tennis and Swimming. However, most of the programs and events that the Athletic Department organizes are done on its own. Apart from some cooperation with the Recreation Department and the Chamber that helps with promotion, the High School's Athletic Department seems to be isolated from working with other entities in the community. The prominence of High School Football and other sports in the community seems to be contradictory with the relative isolation of the Athletic Department. Perhaps as in many communities, the normative stereotypes that the Athletic Department should only operate within the boundaries of the School prevail. On this basis, since the primary role of the School is education, the funding and resources going to the Athletic Department are limited and constrain its capacity to be involved with other events in the community. As regards the level of support it gets from the community for organizing sporting programs and events is mainly through sponsorship or donations of individuals, business and voluntary groups.

### **The Hispanic Chamber of Commerce**

The mission of Hispanic Chamber in Fort Stockton is to support the development of Hispanic businesses in town and promote as well as celebrate the Hispanic heritage. Currently, there are about 80 individuals who are members in the Hispanic Chamber. The events that the Hispanic Chamber organizes and sponsors are Fiestas such as the 16 De Septiembre and the Labor-Day Weekend Fiesta. In terms of inter-organizational cooperation the Hispanic Chamber seems not to be well connected with other entities of Fort Stockton in event hosting. It organizes the festivities of Hispanic heritage mostly on its own. The only organization that appears to have some relationship with is the CVB, which co-sponsors and promotes the Fiestas.

There is also no active participation of the Hispanic Chamber in other events in town. It seems that Hispanic people participate through other organizations in community events and keep for the Hispanic Chamber a heritage and celebratory role. Thus, while many members of the Hispanic Chamber are City officials and community leaders (i.e., the City Council is predominantly Hispanic) there is difficulty in getting funding from the City Council for various projects and special events. The reason seems to be that the heritage programs of the Hispanic Chamber fall short in the priorities and neuralgic issues that the community faces.

### **The Extension Office**

Texas Cooperative Extension plays a vital role in Pecos County and Fort Stockton. Its mission is to provide practical information and education to help people improve the quality of their lives and to help the local communities and neighborhoods address their areas of concern. The Extension Office's education programs promote economic development, environmental stewardship, family health and well-being, youth development, and better understanding of agriculture.

The Texas Community Futures Forum, a state-wide needs assessment, was sponsored by Texas Cooperative Extension and the following issues were identified as most important in Pecos County: education, agriculture, water, economic development, and health care. In addressing these issues, the Extension Office organizes events in Pecos County and Fort Stockton such as Livestock Shows and Horse Shows, a Pecan Show, a Food Show, and Fashion Show, 4-H Shooting events, etc. The Extension Office also sponsors events for youth development and education in co-operation mainly with the Recreation Department, the Library and the School. The extent to which the Office is

involved with other entities in event hosting is constrained by the organization's mission and limited resources.

### **Service Clubs**

Voluntary organizations such as Rotary Club, Lions Club, and Kiwanis Club are important in Fort Stockton's social fabric in bringing local people together to work towards the improvement of the community. Their membership consists of individuals who belong to the socio-economic elites of the community. Hence, there is a hierarchical logic that has exclusionary properties at the expense of lower classes that are not represented. In other words, the improvement of the community is mediated by the elites through the influence and activities of these groups. Their weekly meetings are constant occasions where community issues are presented, public discourse takes place and prevailing attitudes, trends or solutions are articulated. Although these clubs have their own agendas and represent the views of the elites in the community, they have a functional role, which is critical for the organization of an event portfolio. They can promote events in their meetings by calling the community to support them. They inform the community about events and legitimize them in the public opinion. They provide volunteers for the events and call for other people to volunteer.

In this regard, for a small community like Fort Stockton the role of these clubs can be best described as that of a mediator; indeed being catalysts that enable inter-organizational collaboration through public advocacy, increase of awareness and exposure of events to the community. They provide actual linkages among organizations through the relationships that are engendered within their social spaces. However, their exclusionary properties may preclude segments of the community to be represented and exert influence in the community through events or inter-organizational collaboration.

## **STRUCTURAL FACTORS**

In light of the above description, it appears that the factors enabling and enhancing inter-organizational collaboration in event planning and implementation of the portfolio are the governmental partnership and the formalized volunteerism within the community.

### **Governmental Partnership of City-County-School**

The most important structural factor is the governmental partnership among the County, the City and the School District that enables these entities to operate in unison. The partnership creates synergies among different entities that organize sport and cultural events and facilitates the incorporation of events into Fort Stockton's social and economic development. The partnership assists in the functional utilization of synergies required to produce successful events in the community. The Recreation Department benefits entirely by the governmental partnership. In this regard, sport events receive support from a number of community organizations that belong either to the County, the City or the School. In other words, inter-organizational linkages are being created and enhanced to support the hosting of sport events in the community.

The governmental partnership decreases the power struggle among different organizations when it comes to hosting events. In particular, it facilitates the process of active communication and stimulates collaboration among the diverse entities involved in the planning and organization of events. The Recreation Department has converted a former school to a recreation facility. The Tourism Department and the Chamber of Commerce organize sport and cultural events in collaboration with the Recreation Department. The promotion of the Recreation Department's programs and events is done by the Chamber. Thus, there is coordination among the key players including event

organizers and the host community's local authorities to ensure access to the facilities and delivery of services. A local official pointed out:

All entities work together. There is no jealousy, there is no power struggle, there is no "I wanna be the best," but "We wanna be the best together" that is the City, the County, the School, which has made us a very unique community because when you go to a meeting there is no power struggle, there is not somebody who wants to be all in the spotlight, to be the number one. It is to make Fort Stockton the best that we can make it. I think that's what makes us a tremendous success. And now talking of other communities, there is always one entity that wants to rule everything, wants to make all the decisions, wants to govern everything and Fort Stockton is not like that. It's a unity of all three: School, County and City. And each one is to help financially regardless of the race, regardless of the color, of the skin, regardless of the language that is spoken; that cannot make a difference because everyone is equal. And I think that has a lot to do with us being a success.

In this context, events are planned and organized with a consensus regarding common goals and priorities as well as focusing investment on market needs to stimulate economic development. Further, there is a joint utilization of tangible and intangible resources (facilities, human personnel, volunteers, finance, livestock, etc.), which are used for both sport and cultural events. There is an optimum use of facilities with the Recreation Department having immediate access and using the School's, City's and County's properties and facilities. Thus, clearly events are embedded in the local community structures and policy-making.

The sporting facilities in the high school are excellent for football, baseball, tennis, basketball, and volleyball events. Fort Stockton also has three swimming pools and several baseball and soccer fields that belong either to the City or to the County. In addition to the existence of sporting facilities, a local official stressed the intent and willingness for cooperation and reciprocity:

When we have activities going on, we all help, we all participate and we all support it. It's not just one by itself, if they need to use our gymnasiums, we have an International Basketball Tournament here, teams

from Mexico that came and played and we all helped, it was at the high school. So if the Chamber of Commerce is putting an activity and they need our systems in any way whether it is facilities, whether it is man power, all they do is to ask, they organize it and we will help.

### **Formalized Volunteerism**

The extensive network of event-related committees evident in the community and orchestrated by the Chamber engenders and maintains volunteer pools for the array of events in the portfolio. Voluntary committees are appointed to draw support from residents and their involvement at every stage of hosting an event. This is intended to create a sense of common purpose, ownership and pride about the community, and in this sense, the local people who are involved to see themselves as an integral part of the events. Subsequently, all the events have a good cultural fit with the community across several dimensions including values, themes, the community's physical characteristics and infrastructure (i.e., livestock shows, rodeos, historic celebrations, football and baseball tournaments). This depicts the way that the community of Fort Stockton sees itself and wants to be seen by others as a strong, vibrant community that everyone is working together for the enhancement of quality of life for all residents, which makes Fort Stockton a good place to live and raise children. This depiction contrasts with the way that others currently view Fort Stockton as an impoverished and insignificant town, which is "not on the map." In this context, the authenticity of events is critical in representing the residents' pragmatic point of view that reconstructs exogenous stereotypes about Fort Stockton. This authenticity can be described as the integrity of consistent community's representation and public image exemplified through sport and cultural events.

A local official explained why Fort Stockton has such a plethora of committees:



The logic behind that is to have as much community involvement as possible. The more input you have from a community the better the outcome is gonna be because people and anybody who wants to be involved must have the opportunity to be involved. One way to do that is by dividing tasks so that everybody can have access and input to participate in the community. That's the kind of feeling we want to develop in the community where everybody feels like they have opportunity to contribute. And that's how you build community cohesiveness as you go and encourage people to get involved and make sure that everybody who wants to be active has that opportunity. The volunteers in the different committees have been given the freedom to act on the issues. They file reports, they don't have the ability to spend money but when in the past the reports were not listened very well by the officials there was a problem; now [the officials] are listening because there is more community involvement and if they want to be re-elected they have to listen. Instead of having a small group of people directly filing reports we have more input from different segments of the community.

The apparent effort to create a community that is open and inclusive requires the involvement of people and the enhancement of social ties among individuals. Events as communal celebrations provide the space to create or re-create shared meaning that can make people more active towards achieving common goals. The committees constitute a structure that not only facilitates the organization of events but also seeks to enhance collaboration among individuals towards community's shared goals. Hence, the building of inter-connectedness through events is intended to prompt collective action. In this context, the network of committees is a decentralized structure that bolsters the involvement of individuals and community groups in public life and in the organization of sport or cultural events in particular. However, it seems that Fort Stockton's committees have not given the power to take decisions on how to allocate resources and distribute funds. This limits the empowerment of committees to the secondary status of an ancillary role in the community decision-making and event organization.

In this respect, a central issue is the outcomes of the committees' structure on social capital in terms of building trust, mutuality and cooperation within the community.

Fort Stockton represents a case that utilizes voluntary committees and events as a means to enable participants to act together towards the accomplishment of shared goals, but it is questionable whether this binding of community transforms individualistic interests into an internally shared vision and understanding of class and racial differences. In other words, an emphasis on social capital development that maintains and reinforces vertical relationships links the desired outcomes merely with economic benefits and builds trust on the external basis of costs and benefits analysis. In contrast, an internal emphasis on trust that is generated through daily communication and horizontal relationships may lead to a deeper understanding of each other's differences and create strong bonds and community solidarity. The events provide the space for such a deep appreciation, understanding and bonding to take place sharing common internal values but it is uncertain whether the current structure and responsibilities of committees build external or internal forms of trust and social capital. The danger with external forms of social capital is that they may reinforce inequalities and they are weak since they are based on economic benefits which if they cease to exist may fragment the community.

## **SITUATIONAL CONSTRAINTS**

### **Collaboration Friction**

The inter-organizational cooperation is not without unintended consequences in Fort Stockton. The proliferation of events has caused tensions over what should be the priorities of the City and the County. The response of both entities has been rather slow and some people in the community felt that there is a lack of communication between them in addressing the following issues.

The first tension concerns the prohibition by the County to allow children and adults to play flag football on one major Baseball field. The view of some City Council members is that the community should first take care of its own children and residents rather than to provide a field for college baseball events and out-of-town people. In contrast, the County Council's perspective is that baseball and football require very different types of fields and the County does not have the workforce or the resources to maintain the field for dual purposes. Another important reason is that the fans and semi-pro leagues that truly love the sport of baseball take pride in their fields and help to maintain them. These fans do not support the idea of playing flag football in the baseball field. Also, the community's policy to derive economic benefits from events is projected by the County as an additional reason to not allow access to this baseball field. As the County officials state: "College games attract fans from outside the area and that naturally translates into more revenue for our Blue Ribbon City when they visit our stores, service stations, restaurants and motels."

A second tension concerns the noise at Nunez Park caused by the increasing number of events. Residents from the area near Nunez Park complained about a constant barrage of loud music and parties to the City Council seeking relief. The local newspaper reported this issue and presented the views of the protestors (*Fort Stockton Pioneer*, October 12, 2006): "A lot of people are complaining about the noise, even the music, it is noise, we hear tires squealing and beer bottles breaking. How would you like to have this kind of thing in your back yard every weekend." Another protestor pointed out in the same article of the local newspaper: "My main concern is the loud music played at Nunez Park at night time. The daytime festivities are great; however once night falls, it becomes a nuisance."

City Council members are concerned because Pecos County owns Nunez Park, however, the park is within the City limits, and hence enforcement of noise pollution is the City's responsibility. Thus, the problem is that of intersecting responsibilities that may complicate, in this case, the resolution of the tension. One solution suggested in the City Council was all the parks in the City to close at 10 p.m. but the idea was not accepted by the other Council members and City management because, obviously, it would limit the organization of events. The City Council felt that the problem needs to be discussed with the County. The City manager was instructed to meet with the County Commissioners' court and seek to find a solution that will allow Fort Stockton's local celebrations to continue but respect the neighbors. Council members discussed also the possibility of limiting the noise level. However, this would require monitoring each event. Extra cost, alteration of events' program and nature as well as enforcement made this possibility prohibitive.

It seems that at the core of the issue lies the struggle of community factions for the use of facilities for events of a certain nature. While the noise pollution can be disturbing, some people are also complaining about the consumption of alcohol in events, which reflects a tension in values. In terms of inter-organizational cooperation for events, these values intervene and cause friction that becomes apparent in the intersecting responsibilities of the City and the County. The contended imposition for the use of facilities and organization of certain types of events foments these tensions. For example, the local newspaper reported the following opinion of a protestor:

I have lived at my residence for 64 years and this past year's activities have been extremely disturbing, even to those not living near the Nunez park. I have a brother who lives 3 miles outside of the city limits who can also hear this booming music, which is also a disturbance to his household. Nunez Park should be used as it once was, for friendly

gatherings, reunions and kid-friendly parties that all end at a reasonable time. (*Fort Stockton Pioneer*, October 12, 2006)

## **Social Inertia**

The involvement of community residents and the building of social capital in Fort Stockton are constrained by lack of civic engagement. Community leaders recognize this problem and they call it lack of communication or community apathy and they deliberately attempt to involve more citizens in public life through voluntary committees and events. A local official pointed out:

I think, overall, we are a really good community, and of course every community is imperfect. I think that we should make sure that everybody strives to reach that long goal for the whole community and not act just for personal reasons. I think that people should become more active because we do have the same people helping in all kind of things, so we hopefully we'll get more people to become active and invest in the community. So that's why a small town prospers, because people invest in it. There are many people who they either just don't care, they don't see the value in community service or they just feel they couldn't help for whatever reason.

Locals provide different reasons for not participating. Some residents say: "They need to get more folks involved and that is why I don't [participate]. They should ask new people to help." Others support: "I don't think it's a community issue, it just requires more personal time. They could give opportunities to help before an event rather than during." Other residents say that they are willing to help if someone asks them: "If they ask me, I will help out. But I'd like to see more involvement from young people." Similarly, other people say: "I like to help with worthwhile projects; helping children and such but I need more available time." Finally, some residents suggest the need for public recognition of volunteers, which can keep them involved: "Making those involved recognized in some form of public media, i.e., newspaper, or radio. People crave recognition. It helps them to stay involved."

All of the above reasons implicate a number of organizational problems that could be addressed in order to attract and involve more people in voluntary committees and events. It seems that the promotion of volunteerism should be more active not only informing but also asking new people to help. Such a promotion may also communicate to the potential volunteers the importance of their involvement to the community and the ways that they could contribute. A structuring of the events and human labor is required, in ways, so that volunteers can also help before and not only during an event. Also, as suggested, the provision for public recognition of volunteers and their rewarding could increase the commitment of existing volunteers and attract new ones.

Some community officials recognized two important dysfunctions in the current structure of voluntary committees. The first one is that not many new people join the committees and the same people rotate in different committees over the years. While the rotation is an efficient way to involve and have input from different people in different community problems, the absence of new people joining is apparent. A local official pointed out regarding the need to increase volunteerism:

I think like any town we need to get more people involved with what's going on with the schools and the City government. Every time the same group of people does all the work, raising money for different charities and those type of things. You see the same people everywhere. You have one who is in a committee and after the same person goes to another committee and so on.

This situation is exacerbated because young people usually leave the town and in many cases do not return. Also, a portion of the community is apathetic and because of its underprivileged or uneducated status remains detached from community involvement or it lacks the capacity to help. This results in the participation of the same people who are experienced and are capable to help but it excludes the representation and input from

other segments of the local population. A subsequent dysfunction identified by volunteers is that some people who participate in events or committees do not really help:

I think one of the big problems with a small community is that there are people on committees, just to be on committees. Actually they don't serve the purpose, they don't do anything. And I've never been in a committee that we haven't had people like that; they don't do anything, they just attend. And that's problematic, and I'm not sure how much we can do about it; in many events I worked, there were people who wanted to be in them but they didn't do anything. So I'm not sure how we can address that. And I think that's probably one of the biggest problems we face. We are trying to get more people involved, the whole community, not just a certain amount of people in it.

Another related problem was reported in Fort Stockton's museums. It refers to the difficulty of finding volunteers:

It's hard to find volunteers. We have sent individual letters to the whole business people in this community trying to get volunteers. We have trouble getting them. We still have volunteers, and we have people that I can call when we need them but we need more on a regular basis. We do anything that we can do to get volunteers; we have written personal letters to hundreds of people in this town that we know they only work part-time or they don't work at all and we've spoken to civic groups. I had a lot of people that called me and said "I'd like to help you but I'm really busy."

It is not clear why there are not many local people involved with the museums. The deficit of volunteers for the museums is an anomaly in comparison with the involvement of volunteers in other community entities and events. This limits the capacity for the organization of cultural events by the museums and hence constitutes an imbalance within the event portfolio in terms of available volunteer pools.

## **NETWORK ANALYSIS RESULTS**

### **The Special Event Network**

Network analysis can be a useful tool in evaluating community capacity to capitalize on an event portfolio. Fort Stockton, despite the fact that it is a small

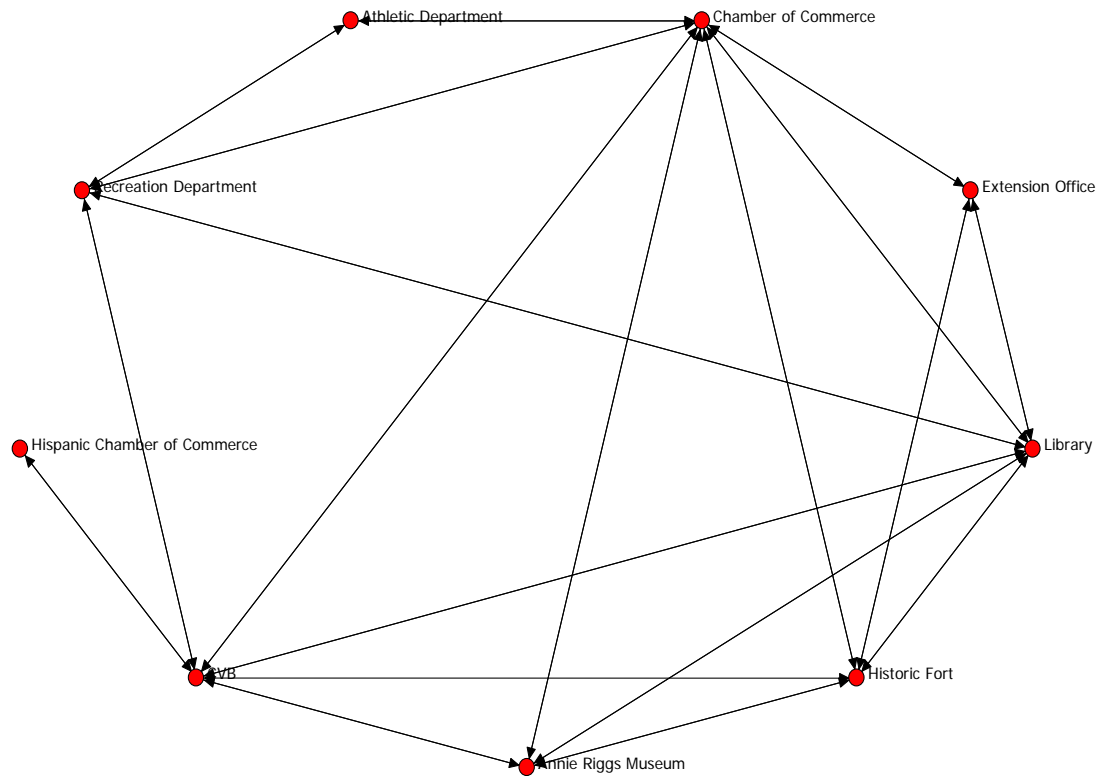
community, it hosts a large number of events throughout the year with an involvement of many agencies and actors. Collaboration is evident across the social networks within the community. However, the actualities of long-term collaboration toward hosting events may cause friction or shift attitudes negatively in agencies' relations. From this perspective, the formal inter-organizational relationships in planning and implement events are examined in this section.

The network analysis envisages a special event network. This is an invisible and informal network, meaning that it is not defined or institutionalized by the community. It is rather an abstract representation of the actual relationships that take place among agencies in hosting the event portfolio. Only formal organizations are included since the purpose of this analysis is to explicate their relationships. The special event network comprises the agencies in Fort Stockton that organize or support events. There is no distinction between sport and cultural events or events of any other type. Thus, the special event network is treated as an integrated whole (system), where inter-organizational linkages, evidently determine event implementations.

Nine agencies that are part of Fort Stockton's special event network were identified. All of them host special events and are involved to some extent in inter-organizational collaboration for events. Thus, the following organizations are viewed as the major actors of the Fort Stockton's event portfolio: Chamber of Commerce, Hispanic Chamber, Tourism Department, Recreation Department, Extension Office, Annie Riggs Museum, Historic Fort Stockton, Library, and the High School's Athletic Department.



**Figure 7.1: The Fort Stockton Special Event Network**



NOTE: For Confirmed “Any Link” Data

Figure 7.1 illustrates the relational position of agencies within the special event network as were measured for any type of relation the agencies have. Inter-organizational relationships were quantified by measuring four types of links: Shared Information, Shared Resources, Help Sent and Help Received. All of these links included both formal and informal collaboration among agencies during the planning and implementation of events. In particular, information sharing concerns any type of conversation, communication or exchange of knowledge about events. Shared resources refer to the common use of facilities, man power, equipment or funding. Help sent and Help received refer to an actual assistance of any type that took place among agencies.

The analysis of results firstly focused on whether collaboration within the event network is consistent across all types of links that were measured. The findings related to this question are reported in Tables 7.1 and 7.2. Table 7.1 reports the reciprocity scores for each type of link in unconfirmed ties. Results show that there is a high reciprocity score for “Shared Information” (.708), which indicates a high level of mutuality in terms of communication and exchange of information. For the other types of links, however, the scores are lower. “Shared Resources” has a score of .571, “Help Sent” .526, while “Help Received” was the lowest with a score of .473. Appendix E also lists the node reciprocity scores for each agency delineating the overall cohesion of the network, which is average since the score of mean group reciprocity is .569.

**Table 7.1: Group Reciprocity**

Types of Links	Group Reciprocity
Shared Information	.708
Shared Resources	.571
Help Sent	.526
Help Received	.473
Mean	.569

Table 7.2 reports both unconfirmed network density scores and confirmed scores (both density and mean number of links). Density is a measure that reflects the connectedness of a network or actual links expressed as a percentage of the total possible number of links. It ranges from 0, which would indicate that no organization in a network is connected to any other organization, to 1.0, which would mean that every organization is connected to all others in the network (Provan et al., 2003). A network with high

density means that there is extensive inter-organizational collaboration or at least potential for fostering cooperative relationships.

**Table 7.2: Confirmed and Unconfirmed Network Scores**

Linkage Type	Unconfirmed Density	Confirmed Density	Mean Confirmed Links
Shared Information	.5694	.4722	3.77
Shared Resources	.4583	.3333	2.66
Help Sent	.4028	.2361	1.88
Help Received	.3889	.2778	2.22
Any Links		.5278	4.22

NOTE: N=9. Density=actual links/total possible links. Mean confirmed links=the total number of confirmed links of a particular type maintained by the average agency. For “Any Links” an agency received a score of 1 if it had any of the above linkage types (confirmed only) with another agency.

Table 7.2 reveals that the process of confirming network ties resulted in substantially lower scores than what would have been the case if ties had not been confirmed. This increases the reliability of the findings. The high unconfirmed density scores can be viewed as indicators of collaboration potential. They reflect weak ties that might readily be transformed into more visible, active relationships through additional encouragement and engagement. Table 7.2 also shows the mean number of links of a particular type for the average agency. Thus, the average agency maintains 3.77 confirmed links to other organizations through “Information Sharing” which is the predominant type of link. Other types of links appear to be weaker. “Shared Resources” maintains 2.66, while “Help Sent” and “Help Received” maintain 1.88 and 2.22 respectively.

In a similar fashion, the confirmed density for “Information Sharing” (.4722) shows that the special event network seems to have a satisfactory communication level in

terms of exchanging information about events. This is facilitated from the fact that Fort Stockton is a small community where everybody knows each other through social contacts. However, confirmed density scores are lower for “Shared Resources” (.333), “Help Sent” (.2361) and “Help Received” (.2778). For these indicators it becomes apparent that there are missing links between agencies. In other words, there are no inter-organizational linkages in terms of collaboration among several entities in the network.

In particular, the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and the High School’s Athletic Department appear to be the most isolated agencies. While for any type of link they are connected to the network, as figure 7.2 shows, for certain types of links they are not connected or they are connected only with one agency. For example, the Athletic Department is not linked with any organization for “Help Sent” and “Help Received”. The Hispanic Chamber of Commerce appears to be connected only with one agency in the network, which is the Tourism Department. The rest of organizations appear to be better connected with each other although missing links show that relationships can be further strengthened in order to optimize collaboration.

Another indicator of capacity for collaboration within the network is the strength of the relationships between agencies, examined through multiplexity scores. Multiplexity indicates the extent to which network agencies are collaborating through only one type of link or in multiple ways. Multiplexity is the extent to which a link between two actors serves a multiplicity of interests (Barnes, 1979). Because four types of links were measured, the maximum multiplexity score that could be obtained was 4.0, indicating that all agencies actually connected to one another are linked through shared information, shared resources, help sent and help received. The average organization in the network has a multiplexity score of 1.44, which is somewhat low. This is explained

by the fact that the organizations in Fort Stockton's special event network are linked through one or two types of links with information sharing being the predominant one.

The multiplexity values show the strength of the existing ties in a network. At a practical level, higher multiplexity means that the network is more stable. When multiple ties are present, the loss of one type of tie has less impact on the network because one or more other types of ties remain in effect, allowing the relationship to continue. Lost ties can more readily be rebuilt because the connected organizations continue to work together (Provan et al., 2003). The low multiplexity score of Fort Stockton's special event network raises concerns over the long-term stability of maintaining inter-organizational relationships for an event portfolio. Considering the informal nature of the network it is possible that even in a small community such as Fort Stockton relationships among agencies as they pertain to events may be broken when problems arise.

This has implications for the modification, and continuation or not of events in question. Since an event portfolio is a constant occasion of episodic performances of some type, the character of these performances is incessantly shaped by the interaction of the organizing agencies involved. For example, the interaction between the Tourism Department, the Chamber and Historic Fort Stockton led to the decision to stop the event of Living History Days as it was known for years and re-construct it as Pioneer Days. However, inadequate communication during the planning and implementation of the event resulted in the limited success of the event. Similarly, insufficient support from community agencies led to the elimination of Harvest Fest. Many agencies feel overloaded with their projects and their own special events and cannot provide assistance to other event organizers. While the event portfolio of Fort Stockton seems to have reached, or perhaps even exceeded, the limits of the community's resources to host

events, the collaboration potential if fully utilized could increase the town's capacity to maintain the already existing events. From this standpoint, the inter-organizational relationships need to be strengthened around a common ground of reciprocity viewing the events as multiple expressions that promote and sustain the community's well-being. Thus, the agencies, which may have a central role in fostering inter-organizational linkages should seek to encourage and develop collaboration towards hosting events.

Secondly, the analysis of results focused on whether certain types of organizations might be more heavily involved in the network than others. Involvement was examined broadly, based on a measure referred to as "Any Links" where the four types of links were combined. An agency was counted as having a linkage score of 1 with another agency in the network if any of the four linkage types occurred and was confirmed. This measure thus makes no distinction between "Help Sent", "Help Received", "Shared Information" and "Shared Resources". Table 7.2 reports these "Any Link" scores. It must be noted that the relational position of agencies in the network was based on this measure because it represents the minimal level of contact that connects organizations. The confirmed density (.5278) can be considered as the generalized density of the network based on at least one link that agencies have. Similarly, the mean confirmed links (4.22) represent the total number of confirmed links of a particular type maintained by the average agency.

The strong or weak involvement in the network was examined through comparing agencies on the basis of their individual centrality and multiplexity scores. Centrality was measured in two ways. The first, degree centrality, is simply a count of the number of other agencies to which a given organization is directly linked. A high centrality score (maximum of  $n-1$ ) indicates that the organization is a central, or high-status, player in the

network, based on its direct connectedness to all others. The second, betweenness centrality, examines not only direct but indirect ties to all other organizations in the network. An organization with high betweenness centrality thus considers the centrality of each organization relative to the ties maintained by all others. The measure used is standardized so that a score of 100 would indicate that the organization is directly connected to every other agency in the network; however, none of these agencies would be connected to each other, except through the focal organization (Provan et al., 2003).

Table 7.3 reports the most central organizations in the Fort Stockton event network, based on their betweenness centrality score. Apparently, the CVB has the highest betweenness centrality of 27.38, which reflects the critical role it has in organizing events. The community invests in tourism and hopes to generate revenues through the organization of events. The CVB is the agency that coordinates planning efforts of different events for tourism development. Along the same lines the Chamber has a betweenness score of 23.81 and is also critical in linking other organizations in the organization of events. These two organizations have the ability to promote and develop inter-organizational relationships in the whole event network.

The Library and the Recreation Department can be described as middle-level actors having betweenness centrality scores of 7.738 and 5.357 respectively. While they cannot influence the whole network they could probably increase the types of links by which they are already connected with other agencies. The Library has a multiplexity score of 1.62, while the Recreation Department has a score of 1.5. Both could increase their multiplexity and enhance the capacity of the event network. For example, the Historic Fort although it has lower centrality score (3.571), it shows a remarkably high multiplexity of 2.25 that enhances its capacity for inter-organizational cooperation. Of

course the fact that it is the town's core reference point in terms of history and major tourism attraction in the area may influence the maintenance of multiple links. However, the Library and the Recreation Department could seek to develop more links in order to improve their ability to host events.

**Table 7.3: Centrality and Multiplexity Any Link Scores for Most Central Agencies**

Organization	Degree Centrality	Betweenness Centrality	Multiplexity
CVB	75	27.38 (1)	2.62
Chamber of Commerce	87.5	23.81 (2)	2.12
Library	75	7.738 (3)	1.62
Recreation Department	50	5.357 (4)	1.5
Historic Fort	62.5	3.571 (5)	2.25
Mean for all organizations	52.7	7.539	1.44

NOTE: Ranked in order of their betweenness centrality score. Individual ranking appears in parentheses next to this score.

### **Attitudes Toward Collaboration**

Thirdly, the analysis of results focused on attitudes toward trust and collaboration. Attitudes are critical for successful relationship building when planning and implementing events. In the context of a network, decisions about whether to link with other organizations, the intensity of those links, and the ultimate success of cooperative efforts in organizing events for community and tourism development depend on the extent to which the members of involved agencies perceive their relationships as beneficial. Also, considering the actualities of the collaboration process, which may cause tensions, the maintenance of trust and positive attitudes toward collaboration within the network are in question.



Attitudes were measured in two ways. First, each respondent was asked to rate every agency to which they were linked (through any of linkage types) based on the overall quality and trust of the working relationship they maintained with that agency. Responses could range from 1 (poor relationship/little trust) to 4 (excellent relationship/high trust). Scores were aggregated and averaged, so that each agency had a trust score that reflected the views of all the other organizations in the network that maintained links to the focal agency. The results show that the mean trust score for all organizations within the network is 3.30, with a range of 2.83 to 3.71. This is a high level of trust, which indicates that there have been established long-lasting, trust-based relationships among organizations. The trust-based ties strengthen the stability of the special event network in Fort Stockton. The other measure of attitudes was an examination of the respondents' views concerning the benefits and drawbacks of their collaboration with other agencies regarding events. Using a question by Lasker et al. (2001), nine benefits and five drawbacks were listed, and respondents were asked to indicate if each had "already occurred", "expect to occur," or "do not expect to occur." These results are presented in the Tables 7.4 and 7.5.

What the data show is that most respondents were positive about collaboration. All agencies agreed and reported benefits that already occurred from their collaboration in the event network. While most of the benefits were reported by the responding organizations, which indicate enthusiasm and consensus toward collaboration, two benefits held lower levels. In particular, only 55.5% of the agencies reported the benefits of enhanced influence in the community and increased ability to shift resources. The rate is relatively high but comparing it with the other benefits reported, it appears that the agencies perceive lesser benefits from collaboration in the event network in terms of the

potential to increase their influence in the community and ability to shift resources to needed areas. A possible explanation is the exhaustion of agencies to use scarce resources for hosting a relatively large number of events and the insufficient recognition for each organization's contribution through working with partners.

**Table 7.4: Benefits of Collaboration**

Benefit	Already Occurred	Expect to Occur	Do not Expect to Occur	% Already Occurred
Enhanced ability to serve my clients	7	0	2	77.7
Enhanced ability to serve the community	7	1	1	77.7
Acquisition of new knowledge or skills	6	2	1	66.6
Acquisition of additional funding	6	1	2	66.6
Increased utilization of org.'s services	7	1	1	77.7
Development of new relationships	6	3	0	66.6
Heightened public profile of organization	8	1	0	88.8
Enhanced influence in the community	5	4	0	55.5
Increased ability to shift resources	5	2	2	55.5

**Table 7.5: Drawbacks of Collaboration**

Drawback	Already Occurred	Expect to Occur	Do not Expect to Occur	% Already Occurred
Diversion of time and resources	0	4	5	0
Loss of control or autonomy	0	3	6	0
Strained relations within organization	0	0	9	0
Frustration in dealing with partners	5	1	3	55.5
Insufficient credit given to org.	4	2	3	44.4

## **Discussion**

The structural relationships of agencies reveal an inter-organizational network with reasonable density, low multiplexity, and average group reciprocity varying across different types of links. The structure of the special event network is centralized with two central agencies. The network operates in accordance with the current political and social arrangements in the community. Agencies interact and cooperate in the organization of events responding to the community impetus towards investing in the event and tourism markets. The mandate that events can redress community issues and, hence, contribute to community development provides their organizing entities a sense of common purpose that overcomes individual differences. It also fosters a fit of events with local culture that is reflected through their themes, messages and enactment. This constitutes the basis of interaction among different agencies in the network.

The innate characteristics of the network influence the character of the inter-organizational relations. First, there is no formal awareness by the agencies that they operate as a network and instead inter-organizational interactions take place intuitively. Second, as a consequence, the network is serendipitous and informal. Third, the network has a small size, and fourth it is comprised by agencies from different organizational domains, which makes it heterogeneous. Most importantly, the small size of the community facilitates the political, institutional and cultural embeddedness of the network in the community policies, structures, norms and processes. In the same regard, the network analysis demonstrates the structural embeddedness of the network through the quality and network architecture of inter-organizational relations that influence event implementations. The high levels of trust and information sharing among network agencies characterize the quality of the network. As Uzzi (1997) demonstrated,

embedded relationships have the components of trust, fine-grained information sharing and joint problem-solving arrangements. The data presented illustrate network embeddedness in terms of trust and information sharing while joint problem-solving arrangements measured primarily through “Help Received” and “Help Sent” appear to be lower. This may be explained along with the average group reciprocity due to the exhaustion of local resources. In other words, the agencies do not have other resources to share or help each other since the number of events in the portfolio is being constantly increased. Consequently, multiple relationships are limited as the low score of multiplexity indicates. Overall, the pressure over resources can be a source of instability in the network, which influences the organization of events creating tensions or may even eliminate events like Harvest Fest from the portfolio.

The quality of the structurally embedded network is characterized also by high reciprocity in information sharing. This facilitates communication and co-ordination among agencies enhancing synergies and providing conduits for thick information exchange of tacit and proprietary know-how, knowledge transfer and learning, which are substantial means for the operation of the event portfolio and event production. However, reciprocity for other types of links needs to be increased in order for efficiency, collaboration and long-standing relationships to be optimized. In general, as exchange is reciprocated trust is formed and a basis for fine-grained information transfer and joint problem solving is set in place (Uzzi, 1997). Due to the small size of the community and the network in Fort Stockton, the above formation process is naturally part of event stakeholders’ aspects of their social and economic lives that are outside the narrow economic considerations of events. Most importantly, this process provides protean resources, embedding event implementations in a multiplex relationship made up of

economic investments, personal and collective visions, friendship and humanistic attachments. Thus, as Uzzi (1997) argued the ties of each agency as well as the ties of their ties generate a network that becomes a repository for the accumulated benefits of embedded exchanges, and subsequently the level of embeddedness increases with the density of embedded ties. In other words, the nature and density of inter-personal ties and interaction among actors determines the overall network embeddedness.

The network architecture is characterized by centralization with two central agencies, which shape the inter-organizational linkages in accordance to the institutional affiliation and associated rank of agencies. Due to the small size of the network and the inter-governmental institutional framework of Fort Stockton, centralization enables coordination, decreases power struggle, and enhances the network embeddedness. Density is another indicator that facilitates structural embeddedness of the network primarily through information sharing, which is the predominant type of link among Fort Stockton's agencies. The other types of links present disconnected agencies, which decrease dramatically the overall density. There are two interrelated reasons for this: homophily and ethnic relations. First, homophily refers to the tendency that similar actors connect at a higher rate than dissimilar ones (McPherson, Smith-Lovin, & Cook, 2001). In the context of organizations, homophily pertains to similar agencies in terms of domain and organizational similarity that cooperate to pursue joint goals (Provan, 1983; Whetten & Leung, 1979; Wiewel & Hunter, 1985), coordinate efforts to effectively deliver services (Oliver, 1990; Provan, 1983) and develop joint programs (Aiken & Hage, 1968; Wholey & Huonker, 1993). The Fort Stockton event network is a heterogeneous configuration of agencies that organize events of different types sharing broad community goals and resources. Notwithstanding the small size of the community

and its event network it appears that homophily is a determinant of the network constraining inter-organizational linkages. This is the case with the isolated actors: the Athletic Department and the Hispanic Chamber, which reflect domain and ethnic relations dissimilarities, respectively. However, the seminal role of sport in the community is represented by the Recreation Department, which is very well linked in the network including dissimilar agencies such as the museums and the Library. Similarly, the representation of Hispanics in events takes place mainly because they are active members of other organizations.

Overall, the consensus that characterizes the role of the event portfolio in Fort Stockton drives the agencies to use and share an integrated set of local resources in event implementations. There is a symbiotic interdependence among agencies in terms of shared resources such as facilities, volunteers and funding, which determines the interactions of the agencies in the network and the operations of the event portfolio. Embeddedness fosters the network integration and the agencies by maintaining positive attitudes toward collaboration, work together to coordinate event implementations. The integration is informal and involves exchange of information and sharing of resources. In this context, the coordinating role of the Chamber and CVB guides the formulation and attainment of shared goals. The major tactic is that events are integrated with the community's tourism and overall product mix in order to maximize their benefits. In this context, beneficial synergies are engendered between sport and cultural events, sport and tourism agencies as well as event stakeholders and the policy community.

It appears that the rural conditions of the community facilitate collaboration and network integration, hence building social capital among the event organizing agencies. It has been shown that where rural communities have been able to develop boundary-

spanning networks that are inclusive of diverse groups, they have been better able to tackle difficult community problems like economic development (Flora, Sharp, Flora, & Newlon, 1997). As the findings of network analysis in this study demonstrate, there is a willingness to share information and expertise and to put resources on the table. This means that a form of social capital is built up among the staff and leaders of rural agencies and people in the network of Fort Stockton. In the search for supplementary resources, agencies are driven toward each other as has been shown in the literature (Snaveley & Tracy, 2002). In this regard, the building of trust and demonstration of reciprocal behaviors in the network are essential to successful collaborations, development of long-term dyadic relationships and overall stability of the event network.

The strong commitment of agencies to collaboration is viewed from a resource scarcity standpoint as a necessity to pool resources among agencies. This is consistent with evidence in the literature about rural communities that view their small size as a resource to harness: there are few organizations and that communities are small in size may make collaboration and trust building easier to accomplish (Snaveley & Tracy, 2002). Thus, the organizations are naturally drawn to each other for mutual support, engaging routinely in the process of reinforcing interpersonal relations (Snaveley & Tracy, 2002). Consequently, network embeddedness can be easier bolstered in small communities since it is easier for event stakeholders to get to know each other on a personal and professional level routinely interacting and building relationships.

In general, an event network combines the perspectives, resources, and skills of local people and organizations. The incorporation of the perspectives, resources, and skills of a broad array of community stakeholders can strengthen the thinking and actions (Lasker et al., 2001). As long as relationships are based on reciprocity, the process of

linkage formation in networks typically will be characterized by balance, harmony, equity and mutual support rather than by coercion, conflict and domination (Oliver, 1990). It seems that an event network can capture the mechanism that makes collaboration especially effective. Future research needs to explore and demonstrate this possibility by comparatively examining various event networks in different contexts. Resource dependence and exchange approaches (e.g., Cook, 1977; Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978) based on social exchange theory (Emerson, 1962; Levine & White, 1961) suggest that resource scarcity may induce cooperation and, hence, are useful theoretical foundations for exploring the nature, determinants and consequences of event networks.

#### **CONCLUDING REMARKS**

The structural context of Fort Stockton constitutes the basis of its capacity to host and use an event portfolio for multiple purposes. The institutional framework and dense social networks enable collaboration and foster inter-organizational linkages. In this context, event organizers operate within an invisible and informal special event network that frames their cooperative efforts to capitalize on events. The inter-organizational relationships are also maintained and enhanced by the community's favorable reactions and support toward events. This has resulted in the proliferation of events in the community, which is viewed from a functional perspective as a means of achieving growth and development. These factors facilitate the incorporation of the event portfolio into the social and economic development of the community.

Fort Stockton's event portfolio is characterized by collaboration among agencies, which is also conveyed as a meta-message in seminal community celebrations like Water Carnival and Harvest Fest. Collaboration is practiced and promoted through the series of



events and is crystallized as part of the community's identity. The evident inter-organizational relationships are manifestations of an internal logic that the collective memory encompasses. From this point of view, it would be accurate to conclude that the inter-organizational relationships in Fort Stockton are embedded in the patterns of social relations and cultural value system. They seek a balance between individualism and collectivism, competition and collaboration and this logic is shaped and expressed through events fostering the development of relationships and enhancing social capital.

Collaboration is a dynamic process that is constantly re-discovered and negotiated in events or elsewhere. Fort Stockton experiences friction and tensions in the cooperative processes of hosting a plethora of events. Intersecting responsibilities that remain uncoordinated, and imposition of conservative values, challenge established relationships and the future of events. Also, social inertia of segments of the population precludes a wider level of assistance and community support toward events. Another way to look at these challenges is through the prism of special event network. Isolated actors need to develop relationships with other agencies within the network and thus embrace the respective segments of the community in event volunteerism. Collaboration within the event network is not consistent across all types of links. Thus, in already established relationships, more types of links need to be developed in order to increase levels of support and efficiency toward events. Reciprocity needs to be more tenaciously sought in order to ensure mutually beneficial and long-standing relationships. This is not to say that Fort Stockton's special event network is problematic. On the contrary, it can be characterized as a dense, to some extent reciprocal, diverse system of agencies that have high levels of trust and positive attitudes toward collaboration. But improving the

community's capacity to capitalize on an event portfolio is a constant task because otherwise events are, from their nature, ephemeral, episodic and fragmentary.

Coordination for an event portfolio is essential. In Fort Stockton the major entities act as coordinators within the event network. Thus, the community's investment on tourism gave to the CVB a coordinating role in the event network. Subsequently, the need for event sport tourism in town linked Recreation Department with other agencies in the network. Social development was addressed mainly by the Chamber, which, as a coordinating body in the network, sought to integrate social and economic development responding to the community's needs. In this regard, Fort Stockton's event network, although not institutionalized is a mechanism for defining the opportunities available and guiding where (i.e., to what organizations or alliances) investment strategies for events should be directed. The ties among agencies secure access to those directions and opportunities. Consequently, the event network is a source of creating and enhancing the social capital of the community by encouraging reciprocity and collaboration toward the whole scope of planning and implementing an event portfolio. Therefore, the special event network stands as an informal but coherent structure, which supports the event portfolio and takes an integrated approach that involves economic, community and tourism development by creating synergies between sport and cultural events and in turn utilizing their short- and long-term opportunities for all the above purposes respectively.

## **Chapter 8: Conclusion**

### **CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS**

The findings of this study indicate that Fort Stockton's event portfolio functions primarily as a means of providing leisure opportunities that enhance the quality of life in town and build its image as a vibrant community. At the same time, this community utilizes the sport and cultural events of its portfolio for tourism and economic development. In this regard, planners integrate events with the community's overall service and product mix. Fort Stockton has established itself as a rural sport tourism destination hosting two of the main Open Road Races in the U.S. and the Sheep-Dog Trials. In addition, the Recreation Department and the School District host a plethora of softball, basketball, football, volleyball, golf, and rodeo events that attract nearby visitors.

The provision of events as recreational opportunities is intended to build community cohesiveness and engage residents in the ongoing public discourse. The events provide the opportunity for residents to come together and share common values. The celebratory atmosphere and sociability that permeate the event portfolio facilitate social interaction for event volunteers and participants. The series of events provide symbolic social spaces where the community of Fort Stockton tests, constructs, parades and celebrates its identity, which evolves as a discursive product of on-going discourse and social processes. Although Fort Stockton utilizes its event portfolio as a means for generating social capital with the involvement of residents in events, there is limited community engagement out of the events' context. The endogenous socio-economic and educational inequalities in the community structure preclude the lower classes to be substantially involved with community events. In turn, for those groups of people who

are involved in events, it is questionable if this involvement is translated to civic engagement. This is the generic problem of transferability of social capital from leisure to civic settings (Glover & Hemingway, 2005). Thus, every community that strives to use events for achieving community development should be concerned with how the social capital generated in events can be transferred to other arenas of social life leading people to civic engagement.

The partnership between the city, the county and the school district and the formalized volunteerism that fosters the event-based social networks, constitute the organizational structures of Fort Stockton that facilitate the incorporation of its event portfolio into the social and economic development of the community where events are institutionally and socially embedded. It enables collaboration in terms of setting mutual objectives, sharing common resources, and coordinating event implementations. This facilitates the creation of synergies between organizers of sport and cultural events and guides accordingly event augmentations.

In general, it is at the community's hand to cultivate and promote synergies between sport and cultural events (Garcia, 2001). However, for these synergies to happen a systematic effort and planning that will integrate sport events into the structures of a community is required. From this standpoint, synergies can be created, nurtured and enhanced based on common utilization of resources and event augmentations that will synthesize event themes, elements and activities. To incorporate an event portfolio into the social structures and policymaking of a host community, a holistic approach is required that will connect sport and cultural events with the framework of sustainable regional development.

In communitarian terms, Fort Stockton is not a community of celebration. Inequalities exist, factional and individual interests interfere with the town's choices and mistrust characterizes often social relations. Events in Fort Stockton viewed from a communitarian perspective illustrate the apotheosis of commercialization. The seminal cultural celebrations, which are intended to be focal expressive practices strengthening the social fabric of the community, help to develop relationships based on thin trust and preclude reflexivity or misrepresent specific conditions. However, this interpretation seems to be incomplete. Considering a series of events brings the challenge of adopting a holistic perspective, which can uncover the multiple realities that are hidden under the layers of social order.

Thus, economic determinism appears to be the functionalist scope that drives Fort Stockton to use events for achieving an array of purposes. This realism legitimizes efforts to host events and motivates event stakeholders to collaborate. At the core of event implementations and planning there is an internal logic that assembles the different event parts, policy domains and symbolic meanings into a coherent community endeavor. Existential concerns drive the need for community residents to form and express in symbolic terms a communal view that responds to the discourse for equity, cooperation and collectivism into an inherently unequal, individualistic, and competitive society. The events represent different aspects of this discourse and epitomize an implied whole based on the collective spirit of the Pioneer era with which Fort Stockton proudly identifies itself. The symbolic expression of existential issues that concern the community facilitates a symbiotic multiformity for events in the portfolio with linking different event elements, functional domains and metaphoric meanings into a coherent community event network. Relativism appears to characterize the event network since the assemblage and

association of events in the portfolio translates different event components in planning and implementation according to the internal logic for balancing individualism and collectivism. Eventually, the symbiosis of different events in the portfolio facilitates the common utilization of local scarce resources for hosting events. Fort Stockton's managerialism entails primarily the inter-changeability of the same resources among different events in the portfolio.

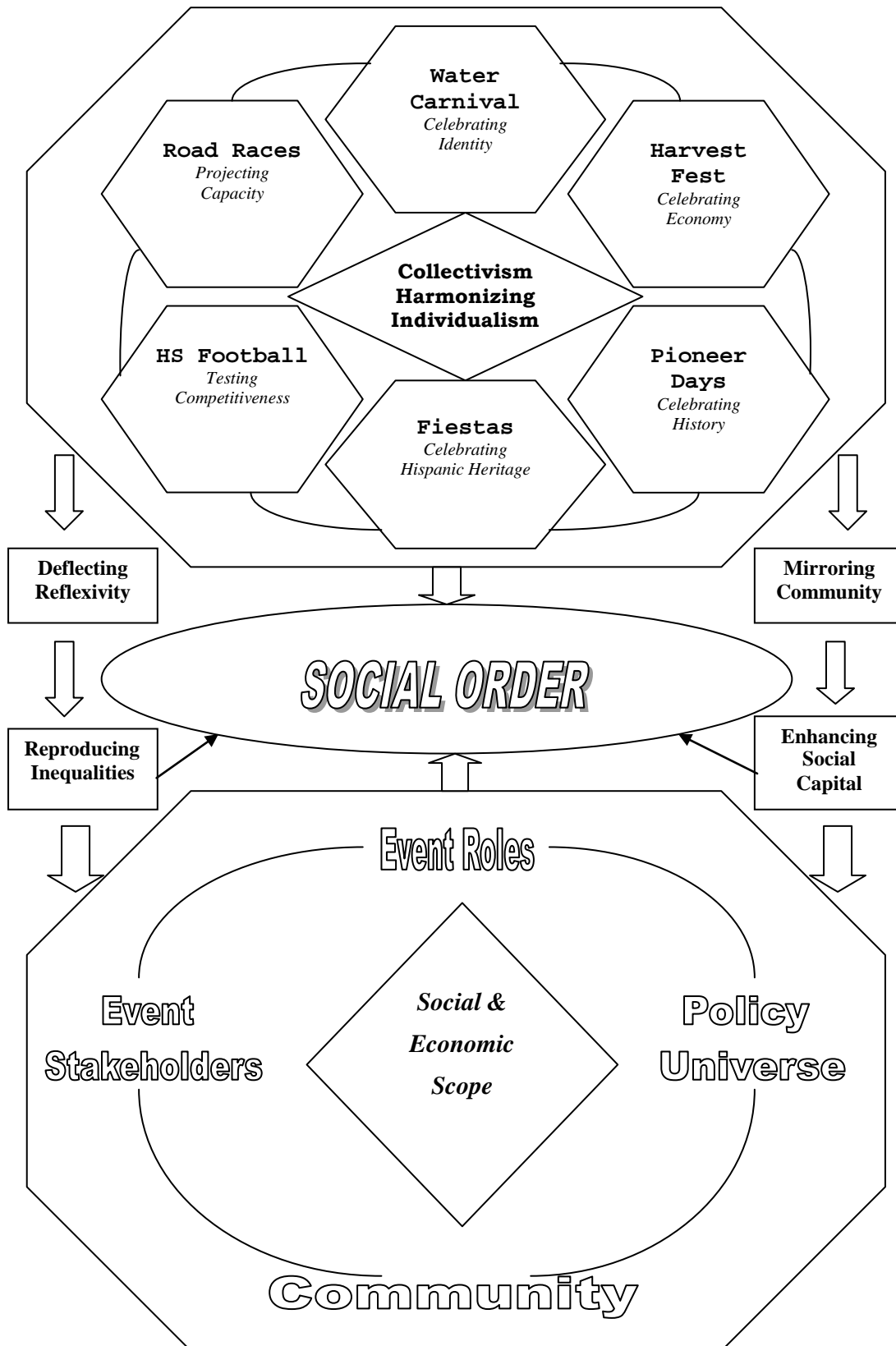
The above picture seems to be a more comprehensive and thorough interpretation of the multi-layered constitutive factors that assist the event portfolio's operation. In essence, the event portfolio is a transfiguration of Fort Stockton's social order. The semantic essence of events is that they deflect attention from the realm of "unsafe" community issues by disassembling their parts and reordering them in patterns consistent with the aesthetics of celebration, fun and performance in either sport or cultural events. It seems that Fort Stockton knows how to celebrate the moments and characteristics that give the community a momentum and create a safe semantic context for the affirmation of local identity.

This metaphoric context is shaped by the recurring series of events. Viewed as dramatic stories the events make a complete story that speaks about Fort Stockton by itself. Thus, each event is an episode of this larger dramatic story. Figure 8.1 illustrates the overall organic context of the entire "story" that events proclaim about Fort Stockton. The event portfolio is not merely the sum of its parts. What makes fundamentally the event portfolio a meaningful semantic context and enduring symbolic space is that each event complements and reinforces the claims of the other. This also allows the expression of different aspects of community life that synthesize the whole semantic essence and functional basis of the portfolio. In particular, it is as if the Water Carnival affirms,

parades, and celebrates local identity. Harvest Fest celebrates the local economy and commercialization. Pioneer Days commemorates the historical past and identity of the community. The Fiestas celebrate the Hispanic heritage. The High School Football tests metaphorically the competitiveness and strength of the community. The Road Races project the capacity of Fort Stockton to capitalize successfully on events attracting visitors and illustrating to the world Fort Stockton's spot on the map.

In this regard, the event portfolio reveals the social order as an extended metaphor by creatively connecting disparate realms of experience in a manner that highlights the definitive features of the community. It mirrors the community as the social order knows itself to be by reproducing existing inequalities and deflecting "unsafe" reflexivity as well as liminality that may harm the current social order. It consolidates local people around conventional values that foster social interaction and prompt collective action. It integrates the community and enhances social capital thereby strengthening its social fabric. This process is characterized by the harmonious interplay of collectivism and individualism in which the semantic connection is predicated. Thus, the event portfolio is linked to the wider societal, economic, and political context of Fort Stockton, as a site to reconstruct and reenact meaningful commentaries that epitomize the collective identity. Furthermore, through a collaborative network the event portfolio is embedded in the economic, tourism, sport, and cultural domains of Fort Stockton and generates economic interdependencies and linkages across the community. A synopsis of the study follows. It summarizes and underlines the answers to the main research questions.

**Figure 8.1: The Organic Context of Fort Stockton's Event Portfolio**





## SYNOPSIS

### **Nature and Character of the Event Portfolio**

Fort Stockton's event portfolio is an informal but socially embedded configuration in local life that facilitates the adoption of an organically holistic planning approach. It consists of sport and cultural events that share common objectives and resources striving to address community issues. It features a few prominent events and a plethora of smaller ones that are means for both economic and community development. In this regard, events in Fort Stockton's portfolio have a dual role: to attract visitors and entice their spending, hence contributing to the economic development of the community and provide recreational opportunities for local people to engage in social interaction and thereby enhance the town's social capital. However, there are no strategies put in place for the systematic leverage of the event portfolio. There is no employment of cross-leverage tactics among the events in the portfolio, which can help to attain and magnify the intended outcomes of events. Rather the planning and implementation of events constitute intuitive ad hoc efforts. Each event based on its own innate characteristics enables the attainment of outcomes, which is facilitated by the use of an integrated set of resources and the adoption of successful practices among events.

The most important sport events of Fort Stockton are the Big Bend and Road Runner Open Road Races, which attract visitors from across the United States. Fort Stockton utilizes these races as sport tourism attractions by integrating them with the community's overall product and service mix while promoting a vibrant image of the community as the resort town in the area. Smaller sport events along with cultural celebrations complement the portfolio by providing continuous opportunities for affordable entertainment and social interaction. They create symbolic social spaces that

respond to the town's lack of leisure amenities, residents' low income as well as social inertia.

As a community development tool, the event portfolio comprises the entire manifestation of expressive practices that are mainly assembled in the festivities of Water Carnival. This event creates symbolic spaces where participants share and construct common ideals and values. The celebratory character of this event draws heavily on elements of local history and tradition that are “dramatized” and enacted in the form of a staged performance that is accompanied by music, dancing, parade and beauty pageants. In this regard, performance is a focal avenue for the expression of local identity wherein sport features as a central activity. This exemplifies that sport and cultural performances have a seminal role in Fort Stockton and their position is critical within the event portfolio. Performance in sport and cultural events seeks to reassemble the value system of the community mirroring its collective persona. The popularity and appeal of events to a wide range of audiences makes them an appropriate vehicle for the expression of values that the community seeks to nurture. They contribute to identity formation and strengthen the social fabric through the massive engagement and participation of people.

At the core of the event portfolio lies an implicit cultural logic, which dramatizes a fundamental existential conflict between cooperation and competition, individualism and collectivism, social benefit and economic interest. The dramaturgical creation of metaphors and associated meanings in the series of events help to negotiate and conciliate the above antithetical attitudes in accordance with the social conventions that characterize the community. In this regard, liminality is not sought and event participants engage in an effort to reaffirm a collective identity through the concurrent use of key cultural elements that deflect undesirable reflexivity and inhibit the suspension of social conventions. This

cultural logic permeates the event portfolio driving the organization of events and establishing parallels among them. The extent to which this is a case of top-down pluralism wherein the economic and political elites aim to inculcate on groups of the community, the values of cooperation and competition as suitable for spectatorship is not clear. What is clear, however, is that a value system is promoted through the organization of events, performance in their festivities and spectatorship of audiences, which shape the nature and character of the event portfolio.

Overall, the event portfolio responds to the ongoing public discourse by selecting themes and corresponding social issues that are regarded as both credible and safe in the cultural context of the community. The thematic context of events maintains the social conventions and hierarchies that shape the local identity and social capital, which in turn reaffirm the social order of the community. The safe issues for Fort Stockton are community integration and collective effort, self-proclaimed identity and image, economic development, sociability, and education. Although the social value generated by the event portfolio in Fort Stockton helps to integrate the social fabric of the community, the lack of liminality hinders its sustainable impact on social development in terms of reducing inequalities and building relationships of thick trust. Consequently, it is unclear whether the social capital is not exclusionary and whether it can develop meaningful long-term social relationships. Most importantly, it is unclear whether there is sustainable transferability of social capital from the event portfolio to other domains of Fort Stockton's social life. Finally, it is unclear whether the increasing commercialization of the event portfolio will alter in the long-term its current character and, hence, whether the economic objectives will continue to be compatible with the social value that events seek to derive.

## **Event Interrelationships**

Event interrelationships are grounded on the instrumental connectivity of events in terms of shared objectives and resources, common elements, symbiotic themes and messages as well as conceptual continuities. This sort of instrumental connectivity establishes the semantic context in both thematic and functional terms by which events complement each other shaping organically an “informal” event portfolio. The organic event relatedness embodies the following aspects: 1) experiential capacity, 2) volunteer pools, and 3) markets. Lack of relatedness exists in the absence of cross-leveraging events in the portfolio.

The organic interrelationships among different events maintain and engender complementarities and the instrumental connectivity facilitates event implementations. Thematic continuities among events in the portfolio reconfirm the metaphoric messages within and outside the community. A conceptual synergy lies at the core of each event, which projects community identity, civic esteem, economic benefit and quality of life. On this basis, events in the portfolio are interrelated not only conceptually but also functionally. This facilitates Fort Stockton’s synchronized use of events for achieving economic and social purposes, and hence, addressing the web of problems that a remote and small rural community faces.

Event production in the portfolio maintains three major characteristics: (1) the family character of events, (2) the importance of sports, and (3) collaboration among different city departments for staging events. In this context, the relationship of sport and cultural events in the portfolio is innately symbiotic sharing common objectives, resources and markets. In addition to symbolic and affective identifications, sport events provide an opportunity for parents to attend their children’s performances and engage in

social interaction fostering the family networks of a tight-knit rural community. The family character is then taken into consideration in cultural events that include sport activities in order to increase their appeal to potential audiences. Also, the inclusion of sport facilitates the enactment of expressive practices that value physical effort, skillfulness and aesthetic harmony as well as attractiveness. The sport events organized by the School and the Recreation Department complement the cultural events organized by the Chamber and the museums providing on a regular basis, opportunities for people to relate with each other, entertain and build social relationships. In turn, all the events in the portfolio provide an aura of celebratory euphoria and community inter-connectedness.

Overall, the event portfolio amalgamates sport and cultural expressions of performance reassembling the whole range of local existence and celebrating its identity. In this context, the West Texas identity and Pioneer mythology are projected consistently as meta-messages throughout the event portfolio fostering a thematic connectivity between the different events that reconfirm local identity. Through this avenue, Fort Stockton presents a self-proclaimed image to the world as continuing to embody the values and ideals that characterize the West Texas tradition. Most importantly, by practicing and illustrating the value of collective action in organizing a series of recurring events, Fort Stockton exemplifies that it is a community in which relatively autonomous and equal individuals of Anglo-American and Mexican-American origins live and work together. Therefore, the resonance of issues and challenges that Fort Stockton faces is sought to be addressed through utilizing events in the development of the community.

## **Capacity of Fort Stockton's Agencies to Capitalize on the Event Portfolio**

The structural context of Fort Stockton is the foundation for its capacity to capitalize on its event portfolio for multiple purposes. The institutional structure and the formalized volunteerism, which foster event-based social networks enable cooperation and cultivate inter-organizational relationships. In this context, event organizers operate within an invisible event network that frames their synergistic efforts to host events. The inter-organizational relationships are also maintained and enhanced by the community's supportive predisposition and favorable reactions toward events. As a result, there is proliferation of events in the community, which is functionally driven in order to utilize events as a means for achieving growth and development.

Collaboration among agencies in event implementations is the foundational catalyst for the organization of Fort Stockton's event portfolio. It is conveyed as a meta-message in seminal community celebrations. It is practiced, demonstrated as well as promoted through a series of events and crystallized as part of the community's identity. Inter-organizational collaboration is the result of an internal logic that the collective memory encompasses. This logic seeks a balance between individualism and collectivism, competition and collaboration, and this logic is shaped and expressed through events. From this point of view, the collaborative inter-organizational relationships in Fort Stockton are embedded in the patterns of social relations and cultural value system. The event portfolio is the common ground that assembles diverse actors in the event network. The latter is a mechanism of creating and enhancing the social capital of the community by encouraging reciprocity and collaboration toward the whole scope of hosting an event portfolio. Most importantly, the event portfolio is an abstract system, wherein an integrated approach is taken about economic, community and tourism

development by creating synergies between sport and cultural events, and in turn utilizing them concurrently for all the above purposes.

In operational terms, coordination throughout Fort Stockton's event network is essential. The Chamber of Commerce and CVB are the central organizations that coordinate cooperative efforts in event planning and implementation. They connect all organizations in the network and guide where investment strategies for events should be directed. Although Fort Stockton's event network can be characterized as a reasonably dense system of agencies that have high levels of trust and positive attitudes toward collaboration, there are isolated actors (i.e., Hispanic Chamber and High School's Athletic Department) that need to develop relationships with other agencies within the network, and thus embrace the respective segments of the community in event volunteerism. Also, collaboration within the event network is not consistent across all types of links. Thus, in already established relationships, more types of links must be developed in order to increase the levels of support and efficiency toward event implementations. In essence, reciprocity needs to be more persistently sought in order to ensure mutually beneficial and long-standing relationships, and thereby, strengthen the current structure and collaborative linkages of the network. Enduring patterns and configurations of reciprocity and collaboration are essential because events are from their nature ephemeral, episodic and fragmentary, which makes an event portfolio and its supporting network susceptible to harmful environmental, contextual and situational changes.

The moderate reciprocity and limited number of links among organizations within Fort Stockton's event network can be explained by the increasing number of events in the event portfolio. The proliferation of events has created pressure over using the scarce

resources of the community. While it is not clear whether there is overuse, it seems that a possible exhaustion of resources threatens the future of some events (as happened with the elimination of Harvest Fest), the stability of the portfolio and the overall balance in the network. Fort Stockton is reaching its maximum capacity in event hosting and it needs to determine the ideal number of events for its portfolio. Market research for understanding demand about events and estimation of their economic impact are needed to help direct investment to events that bring the best value.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Towards Building Community Capacity for Capitalizing on Event Portfolios**

This study illustrates that Fort Stockton's event portfolio can be characterized as a system that assembles the host community's event stakeholders and policy-makers in a collaborative network of hosting events and supporting their use for a variety of purposes that aim towards economic and community development. In this context, synergies for deriving economic and social outcomes of events are created and enhanced. Most importantly, events become an indispensable component of the community's development efforts, which bolsters their embeddedness in the structures and processes of local life. On this basis, sport and cultural events share common objectives, resources and markets fostering the organic development of an integrated approach. This can be described as an "event-centered" approach, which does not place boundaries between sport and cultural events and bridges the chasm evident by the innate fragmentation of the event industry in general.

Sport events are an essential constituent of the portfolio that attracts audiences, promotes social interaction, and mobilizes affective attitudes about the community by



conveying meta-messages of a strong community identity and an image of a vibrant and sociable small town. The cultivation of the same meta-messages takes place in cultural celebrations reinforcing their meaning and establishing synergies between sport and cultural events. Common elements are used throughout the event portfolio fostering a conceptual continuity about what the community proclaims to be and aims to accomplish. Sport is an element in most of the events and it is mobilized systematically to serve the particular purposes of each event. Thus, sport is implicitly viewed as an integrated component of local culture and life.

The resonance of tourism for Fort Stockton and the impetus to diversify and revitalize its economy has driven the community to utilize events as a tool for attracting visitors and enticing their spending. The existence of natural resources, sporting facilities and an inter-organizational collaborative network of major supporting agencies have been mobilized by the community to utilize prominent events as tourism attractions targeting mainly the subcultures of open road car racers, motorcycle riders and sheep-dog handlers. In addition, recurring small sport events provide complementary entertainment and visitation on a regular basis, which led the CVB and City Council to allocate contingency funding for such events that bring visitation to Fort Stockton. Moreover, the social value of sport events that improve the quality of life in Fort Stockton and foster a sense of celebration as well as social interaction bolsters the community support to them and enhances synergies with cultural events in order to amplify their social outcomes.

In this context, event tourism is embedded in the community's overall development effort, which uses sport and cultural events as attractions along with the town's tourism product and services. In addition, sport is employed as augmentation in cultural events that bring visitation. Sport activities are woven in most of the Fort

Stockton's cultural celebrations. Event tourism delivers social benefits to the community, especially through their conceptual, thematic and functional connectivity with cultural celebrations throughout the event portfolio. In particular, the Chamber implements the promotion of sport and cultural events and along with the CVB, they integrate events with the community's overall product and service mix. Also, the similar range of meta-messages are conveyed throughout sport and cultural events about the sociable and small-town charm of Fort Stockton, its collective spirit and West Texas identity. Therefore, the event portfolio viewed as a system is not merely an abstract representation of intangible arrangements that serves as a theoretical metaphor and interpretation scheme to understand the process through which events in Fort Stockton are hosted. It is rather an actual systemic configuration of events, a mirror of the community's social order, supported by a network structure of community organizations. This invisible and non-institutionalized, though actual system has a conceptual core, internal logic and purpose, which views under the same prism the use of a series of sport and cultural events for achieving economic, social and tourism development, hence integrating the event portfolio with the overall rural development endeavors.

There are a number of implications that derive from this study for building capacity and optimizing a host community's event portfolio potential. First and foremost, it is heuristically useful to think of event portfolios as a system and their actors operating within a network. This brings the advantage of assembling different events and their organizers under a common framework by defining a shared purpose and vision, implementing joint strategies, delineating the operational structure of the supporting network and enhancing collaboration among the key actors. In essence, an event portfolio can become an enduring mechanism of social capital if it is embedded in the social

structures and processes of a host community. As Granovetter (1985) argued, economic action is embedded in the structure of social relations between actors including kinship links, and hence, the organizations operate embedded within a broad social nexus. On this basis, event stakeholders are embedded in local relationships and in order for an event portfolio to operate, there must be enduring relationships between event stakeholders and the respective organizations of the host community that support event planning and implementations. The more types of relations exist the more sustainable the relationships in the supporting network of actors are (Freeman et al., 1989; Kilduff & Tsai, 2003; Knoke & Kuklinski, 1982; Scott, 2000), and therefore, multiplex embeddedness is essential for ensuring the sustainability of an event portfolio.

Conceptualizing an event portfolio as a system, which can generate, maintain and enhance social capital is essential for integrating event planning efforts. Social capital connects social and economic uses of events on the basis that an investment in social relations may derive expected returns in the market place (Bourdieu, 1985; Coleman, 1990; Putnam, 2001). In particular, Bourdieu emphasizes the instrumental role of social capital and considers the substantive characteristics of individuals and their kinship relationships, but only insofar as these are privately profitable. On the other hand, Coleman and Putnam view social capital from a collective perspective and consider how trust, cooperation or reciprocity can be generated. Both perspectives are salient for the implementation of event portfolios (instrumental focus) and their uses as community development tools (collective focus). Central to such a purpose is Coleman's functional view of social capital as the cumulative resources developed through relationships and networks, which have purposive action and intend to achieve certain goals. Similarly,

Putnam's concern with how social capital binds together individuals who otherwise might fragment is essential for forming, developing, and maintaining event portfolios.

On the basis of this resource and structural view of social capital, the role of an event portfolio can be explicated as a strategic resource with the purpose to create or enhance the web of social networks in a host community. In this regard, an event portfolio can be used to foster social networks on two echelons: first, in enabling social interaction and improving informal networks through the practice of events, and second, in developing and maintaining an enduring network of event stakeholders that will collaborate in event hosting. In other words, an event portfolio can be ultimately a mechanism through which event stakeholders can gain access to resources, they can increase their cultural capital through contacts with community leaders and experts or they can affiliate with organizations and groups that confer value and support to their events. In this context, as the organization theory literature demonstrates (e.g., Perrow, 1993; Uzzi, 1997; Podolny & Page, 1998), trust is essential for fostering relationships. Thus, the formation of trust among actors within an event portfolio is a critical factor in exchange relationships and eventually on the development of social capital.

The conceptualization of an event portfolio as an embedded system that can create social capital and strengthen the social fabric of the host community can guide the formulation and implementation of event strategies that serve multiple purposes including economic and social benefits. In this regard, the objectives for tourism or social development can be constituents of the same scope that is represented by a common strategy. For example, a common strategy could seek to offer opportunities for social networks to interact and create or enhance their bonds in prominent events that celebrate an aspect of the host community and also attract tourism visitation boosting the local

economy. In this context, collaboration can be promoted to stir collective action and support the network of groups and organizations that host events.

The event portfolio can be a substantial tool in community development by fostering relationships and social networks for the development of common well-being. Events as leisure practices of shared meaning can provide the means to create communities of celebration (Borgmann, 1992) and engage people in social activities that promote justice, mutuality and cooperation (Etzioni, 1995; McIntyre, 1992). Participation in communities of celebration entails people coming together in sports, festivals, hobbies, volunteering and the arts and finding in these leisure activities common and public goods (Arai & Pedlar, 2003). Trust and co-operation can be nurtured through the participation in cultural activities, from group dancing to songfests, to community theatre, to rap festivals (Putnam, 2001). On this basis, the social development of a host community can be fostered around those focal practices, which will unite the different elements of expressive practices and genres providing opportunities for people to connect and create shared meaning. In other words, the possibility an event portfolio may create is the enhancement of generalized community social capital that in Putnam's (1995) definition is the features of social life (i.e., networks, norms, and trust) that enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives.

The potential an event portfolio may have for the social engagement, generalized social cohesion, trust, mutuality, co-operation and openness has yet to be proved. In general, the mechanisms by which social capital can be transferred from leisure to civic settings are unknown (Glover & Hemingway, 2005). It seems that an event portfolio has the potential to be a mechanism for the transferability of social capital to civic settings. Events as leisure practices can promote sociability and provide opportunities for more

unfettered social interaction, and the creation of potentially richer social ties in which social capital can be generated (Glover & Hemingway, 2005). This is in accordance with Chalip's (2006) contention for enabling sociability and celebration in social event leverage and also concurs with the communitarian perspective that the sense of celebration can be a focal point where people create shared meaning (Borgmann, 1992; Arai & Pedlar, 2003). In this regard, the creation of liminality and associated *communitas* (Chalip, 2006) is essential. Liminality in events provides a secure temporal space within which controversial social and political issues can be metaphorically addressed and discussed (e.g., Errington, 1990; Holland & Skinner, 1995; Manning, 1981; Mathews-Salazar, 2006; McCabe, 2006; Rockefeller, 1999), and engenders *communitas* where event participants create a shared meaning and reconstruct social reality without racial, ethnic or linguistic boundaries (Turner, 1974, 1984).

In terms of sport and tourism development, an event portfolio may help bridge the missing links among sport, tourism, and other regional organizations (i.e., public policy entities, volunteer or business groups) by steering collaboration and encouraging joint strategic planning. Thus, it may facilitate the cross-leverage of sport events with the host destination's overall product and service mix (Harrison-Hill & Chalip, 2005), and seek to associate the tourism product and the image of the destination with the liminality and *communitas* that may be fostered throughout the event portfolio in order to amplify its appeal to event patrons and tourists. It may also enrich and diversify the tourism product by offering an expanded array of events to a wide range of target audiences.

Overall, the use of events in a portfolio for different purposes is interrelated and can derive economic and social outcomes depending on the type of event, its accompanying markets and strategies employed. It seems that the principal strategies that

events can be used include their use as attractions, as complementary recreation or as seminal celebrations. The extent to which a common policy framework and inter-organizational cooperation guides event strategies, reciprocal tactics may be applied to complement or reinforce event implementations and their subsequent outcomes.

The case of Fort Stockton represents an illustrative example where the small size of this community and its institutional framework facilitate the development of an event portfolio and a supporting network. In this context, although a number of event outcomes are attained, two elemental and interrelated aspects merit attention, which inhibit Fort Stockton to realize the full potential of its portfolio as a tool in community development. The first one is the lack of strategies and tactics to cross-leverage events. The second one is the essence of dramaturgical event meanings, which construct local identity and reaffirm its social order but constrain liminality and the creation of *communitas*. Strategic planning is essential here for the employment of cross-leverage strategies that can attain and magnify intended outcomes and construct events in ways that foster liminality and associated *communitas* throughout the portfolio. Fort Stockton has a fertile ground for the employment of joint economic and social leverage strategies but the context of other communities can be more challenging. For example, urban communities present a plethora of actors with conflicting interests, which makes much more complex and challenging an effort to assemble different event stakeholders and the policy-makers to work in unison building an event portfolio and devising common strategies for a series of different events. Also, it is more difficult to foster collaboration among actors and ensure a trouble-free operation of the supporting network that includes a web of fragmented stakeholders. For example, the fragmentation of sport and tourism communities impedes the development of synergies for sport tourism development (Weed, 2003).

Since an event portfolio is a non-institutionalized and abstract concept in the innate fragmentation of events, this makes it more susceptible to centrifugal forces that may cause divergence among event stakeholders. The antithetical values that different events represent and the opposing interests of event stakeholders are inhibiting factors for the creation and harmonious operation of an event portfolio. The inclusion and influence of political and commercial interests in the planning and implementation of events may exacerbate antagonism and be destructive for events (e.g., Allison, 2006; Barney, 1993; Budd, 2001; Lippke, 2001; Walsh & Giulianotti, 2001) because of the resulting negative effects when commercial interests curtail or seek to control events (Chalip, 2006). Also, when the economic rationales for hosting events are euphemistic legitimizing rhetoric (Sack & Johnson, 1996; Whitson & Macintosh, 1996) for the agendas of political elites (Chalip, 2006), events fail to deliver the promised benefits, hence disenchanting host communities, which in turn may withdraw their support from the events. Another problem that inhibits the creation and harmonious operation of event portfolios is the lack of knowledge about the ways that dissimilar events can co-exist and effectively be incorporated into the portfolio. For example, the use of arts and potential synergy with sport events seems to be challenging. Garcia (2004) identified as current limitations in this process the lack of coordination among event organizers, tourism bodies, city planners and the arts community, and the tendency of host communities to use the arts as a mechanism to attract media attention and external visitors rather than as a vehicle for local representation and empowerment.

Although the above problems inhibit host communities to organize an event portfolio, this does not mean that an effort to build community capacity to develop effective and efficient event portfolios is a utopia, but that rather we must find the means



to capitalize on the strategic opportunities that event portfolios may offer and advocate for their potential. The paradigm shift in the study of event leverage grounds such an endeavor. The objective is to identify the strategies and tactics that can be implemented prior to and during an event in order to generate particular outcomes (Chalip, 2006). Similarly, the strategic and tactical focus of event portfolio leverage should identify the set of joint strategies and tactics that enhance synergies among different events in order to serve multiple purposes and generate intended outcomes.

On this basis, the logic for event portfolio implementations should be an integrated one, prescribing event organizers and host communities to cross-leverage the different events for economic, social, sport and tourism development. In other words, the incorporation of different events into a portfolio requires a holistic mindset in viewing community, economic, sport and tourism development in concert. This should not only facilitate event cross-leveraging efforts for each of the above purposes but also it should seek to foster connectivity between them. In essence, the primary strategic opportunity that an event portfolio offers is that it lays a foundation where a common approach may be taken among different policy communities and event stakeholders by functioning in concert to leverage all the different events that comprise a host community's portfolio.

It appears that the foundation for building community capacity to host and capitalize on a series of recurring events is to develop an internal logic and grounding essence that permeates and guides the portfolio and is capable of assembling events as well as establishing connections among different event stakeholders and the pertinent policy-making authorities. Accordingly, inter-organizational cooperation between event stakeholders and the policy-makers can be achieved by setting a common policy and particular objectives for the event portfolio. This will shape the strategies and tactics

employed for achieving the set of particular objectives. The principle of sustainability should pervade such a policy for an event portfolio in order to balance the economic and social outcomes of events and facilitate their convergence with the regional community development in terms of fair distribution of benefits (Campell, 1996) and harmonious dispersal of economic, social and environmental impacts (Fitzgerald & Leigh, 2002).

In envisaging the creation of an event portfolio, it is heuristically useful to discern and categorize the different events in genres including festival, ritual, game and spectacle. On this basis, event types can be classified in terms of the performance that they entail including cultural, sports, arts, and mixed. In turn, events can be classified according to the purposes they serve including tourism, celebration, recreation and education. This classification is not exhaustive since events can be invented for every new purpose or mode of performance. It rather represents the main facets and roles of events across all the genres, which demonstrate the potential to be integrated. Yet, before attempting a purposive assemblage of events in a portfolio, it is critically constructive to understand the cultural logic that grounds and drives the universal human need for expression through events.

As Geertz (1973) explained, events are dramatic stories that people tell themselves about themselves. Turner (1974, 1984) suggested that the dialectic between flow and reflexivity is the common characteristic of all events since they all have at some extent a reflexive aspect providing thus an opportunity for participants to flow in unison even when the terms of interaction are antagonistic. Hence, according to Turner, events can be conceptualized as commentaries and critiques on, or as celebrations of, different dimensions of human relatedness and may constitute on various levels and in various verbal and nonverbal codes, a set of meta-languages whereby a group of community not

merely expresses itself but, more actively, tries to understand itself in order to change itself. Similarly, Handelman (1990) theorized events as dense concentrations of symbols, locations of communication that convey participants into versions of social order, and their mandate is to engage in the ordering of ideas, people and things.

In this regard, the understanding of a series of events as symbols, meta-commentaries and dramatic stories that convey a community to versions of social order by manifesting different dimensions of human relatedness can help event organizers and host communities empathize the multiple realities and layers of social order that lie underneath events. This means that a series of events should relate to the ongoing public discourse of a host community and provide opportunities for the expression of different versions of social reality. Consequently, joint strategies and tactics in an event portfolio should seek to address salient community issues that respond to matters pertinent to people's lives such as existential, political, historical or social concerns.

As the case of Fort Stockton demonstrates, the building of community capacity to host an event portfolio requires a holistic mindset that prompts multifaceted integration. It seems that this integration can be delineated in three dimensions. First, the conceptual dimension refers to the extent to which there is connectivity of the events in the portfolio that aims to amplify the meanings, messages and appeal of events to audiences. The use of common elements such as narratives, symbols/theming, and ancillary events are some of the means that can foster conceptual connectivity. Second, the functional dimension of integration refers to the degree of operational reciprocity that characterizes an event portfolio in terms of cooperation, use of same resources, sharing of knowledge and expertise throughout the organization of different events. Third, the policy dimension of integration refers to the scope of multiple purposes the events in a portfolio are intended

to serve such as fostering trade, building host community image or celebrating local identity through the use of joint and complementary strategies. The potential for creating synergy between social and economic uses of events can be fostered by the incorporation of event portfolio into the regional development policy of a host community.

This study illustrates that the operational organization of an event portfolio is a complex undertaking for host communities. It involves the constant collaboration of a number of event stakeholders with different interests and consequently conflicts may arise that need to be resolved. It involves the coordination among event organizers in the timely placement of events so that they do not conflict with each other or with other circumstances that would decline attendance. It involves finding ways of connecting different events without forfeiting each event's uniqueness. It involves the cultivation of an intangible, symbolic space wherein celebration is heightened, sociability is encouraged and meaningful social interaction is fostered. This symbolic space can be amplified by an enduring integral liminality permeated throughout an event portfolio, which may exemplify the overall character and identity of the portfolio. In this context, different events can be re-created and harmonized. For example, the emergence of new hybrid forms of events, such as in-between events, can foster integral dramaturgy through novelty and providing opportunities for new modes of expression. At the same time, hybrid events may foster connectivity between different events by combining their elements and pointing out those characteristics and messages that enhance synergies among all the events in the portfolio.

Also, the organization of an event portfolio involves determining what events should be included in the portfolio and their total number. Clearly, the equilibrium in the number of events is needed so that event policy purposes are served without causing

market saturation or exhaustion of local resources. For this reason, market demand should be estimated, resource capacity appraised and impacts of events evaluated in order to decide what events should be included in the portfolio. The reach and frequency of events is another critical parameter that needs to be determined in order for a host community to design events according to the target markets that intends to attract. The advantage of an event portfolio is that different events can be used to reach diverse markets (Getz, 1997) by taking place at different times of the year and appealing to consumers across the range of psychographic profiles to which the destination seeks to appeal (Chalip, 2004; Getz, 1997; Schreiber & Lenson, 1994).

Overall, the case of Fort Stockton illustrates important insights to the phenomenon of event portfolio. These are useful for building knowledge towards a general theory. The foundations of such a theory can be grounded upon an integrated framework seeking to identify the means by which host communities and event organizers can adopt a holistic approach in terms of organizing a series of interrelated events embedded in social structures and processes as well as policies for regional development. It seems that some of the critical components in building capacity for event portfolio implementation include the embeddedness of sport and cultural event entities in the social and political structure; the joint strategic planning that supports particular tactics; and the extent to which strategies are integrated with sustainable community development. The insights stirred by the study are presented and discussed in four conceptual frameworks that were generated in order to explain general event portfolio planning, social utilization of event portfolios, in-between dramaturgy in events, and event portfolio design. The following chapter presents and elaborates on the constructed frameworks.

## **Chapter 9: Theoretical and Practical Implications**

There are a number of theoretical and practical implications that derive from the study. These are presented in this section as four frameworks guided by the results of fieldwork in Fort Stockton and further developed in concert with the literature. The findings constitute the basis towards generating a core conceptual framework for the study and application of event portfolios. It is emphasized that the generated models are neither a summary nor represent an ideal paradigm that happens in Fort Stockton. Rather the findings in Fort Stockton serve to explain the event portfolio in this community and further theorize the phenomenon in accordance with evidence from the literature. The generated frameworks are not sport-focused but integrated within the social context and other social phenomena that shape an event portfolio. A realist, holistic, strategic, sustainable and network approach permeates its conceptual foundation. In this regard, the generated models belong to the realm of social theory.

In general, the elements that constitute a theory are always in question. Depending on the philosophical standpoint (e.g., scientific reductionism or inductive empiricism) a theory can be a set of etiologically linked concepts (i.e., causation of relationships) concerning some phenomena from which one derives falsifiable hypotheses or it can be an abstract, symbolic representation of, and explanation of, social reality. Etymologically, the word theory derives from the Greek word “θεωρία” that means “contemplation, speculation.” The word “θεωρία” in turn, derived from “θεωρός” (spectator), meaning literally “one looking at a show.” Thus, the construction of theories serves the purpose of explaining, predicting and mastering phenomena. In many instances, models of reality are constructed illustrating generalizations about observations that consist of an interrelated,

coherent set of ideas and models. Social theory refers to the use of theoretical frameworks to explain and analyze social patterns and large-scale social structures.

Harrington (2005), in discussing the meaning of social theory, notes that it is largely equated with an attitude of critical thinking, based on rationality, logic and objectivity, and the desire for knowledge through “aposteriori” methods of discovery, rather than “apriori” methods of tradition. Social theory can be seen as being about inspiration involving patterning or accommodation, bringing ideas together (Kaplan, 1964) and explanation as well as prediction, adhering to positivist and functionalist expectations about explanation (Thomas & James, 2006). Mouzelis (1995) points out that there are essentially two kinds of theory used by social scientists, which are theory as tools for thinking (map out the problem area) and theory as a set of statements telling us something new about the social world and which can be proved or disproved by empirical investigation.

In this regard, the theoretical frameworks that were generated from the findings of this study are an amalgam of the above two kinds of social theory. They constitute primarily tools for thinking about event portfolio planning but also represent conceptual models exploring this new phenomenon and proposing ways for its understanding and management, which can be confirmed or not by future empirical research. The interplay of induction (i.e., identifying themes from the data) and abduction that were employed exemplify their coherence but do not prove them as facts. The reasoning process of abduction by selecting and constructing plausible explanatory models places the generated frameworks in a probation status and it is rather a process of seeking premises by furnishing a problematic theory and explaining the causal relation among the facts. As

Peirce (1955, 1960) argued abduction is the basis of interpretive reconstruction of causes and intentions, as well as of inventive construction of theories.

Finally, a critical realism perspective guided the understanding and interpretation of causation in the event portfolio. Layder (1993) argues that a key aspect of the realist project is a concern with causality and the identification of the causal mechanisms in social phenomena and defines realism as centrally comprising an attempt to preserve a “scientific” attitude towards social analysis at the same time as recognizing the importance of actors’ meanings and in some ways incorporating them in the research. In this respect, Layder’s (1990) alternative conception of causality in the social world is a useful theoretical foundation. Layder, in moving towards a generative network approach of theory, argued that the orthodox linear chain definition of causality should be replaced by a more open generative network approach understanding generative phenomena in terms of circuits of generative loci and the conduits, which bind them together through reciprocal effects and interdependences (Layder, 1990). In this regard, the emerging theoretical frameworks took into account the reciprocal effects and interdependences in the ways that an event portfolio is organized and implemented in the social, economic, political and cultural context of a host community.

#### **GENERAL FRAMEWORK OF EVENT PORTFOLIO PLANNING**

In generating a general theoretical framework towards the planning of event portfolios, a starting foundation is to identify the factors that determine the process and outcomes of strategic planning. The contextual dynamics of a host community synthesize the event portfolio and then facilitate or constrain event implementations and joint strategies in the portfolio. While contingency factors may have an impact occasionally, it



appears that there is a constant set of factors that impact the ways that an event portfolio is used to fulfill policy purposes. These factors are the institutional structures, patterns of social relations, local resources, and market demand.

In particular, the institutional structure establishes the formal organizational framework where events are planned and implemented. The patterns of social relations shape the informal relationships and the character of social interaction that bolsters the semantic essence, organization and strategic efforts of events. The local resources are the available assets that a host community may utilize in event organization and joint strategies for achieving a range of outcomes. The market demand is the existence of interest in local or non-local markets where audiences have been identified as potential attendants of the events. Both the local resources and market demand are micro-level factors that need to be identified and managed in order to strategically organize an event portfolio. The institutional structures and patterns of social relations are factors that impact on the meso and macro-social levels that characterize a community. Hence, event organizers and host communities need to be aware of them in order to devise suitable plans and strategies for events compatible with the generic policy-making of a host community.

Policy-making is at the interface with event planning. The concepts of policy universe and policy community are particularly useful to delineate the interacting domains of event planning and generic policy-making. The realm of intersecting responsibilities and interests shape an informal network that influences event portfolio planning. The policy universe is the large population of actors and independent interest groups interacting and competing with each other for influence over policy (Weed, 2001). The interaction and inter-dependencies between event stakeholders and the policy

community that deals with sectoral issues comprise the policy event network. The policy network can be understood as the linking process, the outcome of those exchanges within a policy community or between a number of policy communities (Weed, 2001). In this context, the policy network should view an event portfolio as a strategic opportunity that can promote joint tactical planning and enhance mutual relationships in order to accomplish multiple policy purposes. On this basis, the ideal possibility is the application of integrated strategic planning on an event portfolio, which sets common policy purposes for tourism/economic, social and sport development.

Even if integrated strategic planning is applied, the organization of events and implementation of joint strategies entails the coordination of a complex web of structural interdependencies, semantic characteristics, contextual dynamics and policy processes. In order to understand better how an event network operates in this context it is necessary to identify the major constituents that impact event portfolio implementation and, therefore, need to be managed. In this respect, the event portfolio implementation requires a number of organizational antecedents and involves a series of implementation parameters.

### **Organizational Antecedents**

The organizational antecedents that a host community should seek to build and foster in order to effectively and efficiently host its event portfolio include the following: event network embeddedness, inter-organizational reciprocity, event integrity, and participatory inter-connectedness. Each is described below.

#### **Event Network Embeddedness**

An even network must have strong, enduring relationships between event stakeholders and the policy universe. This can be facilitated by the extent to which the

relationships are embedded in the values, structures, and processes of a community. Zukin and DiMaggio (1990) classified embeddedness into four forms: structural, cognitive, political, and cultural. The last three domains of embeddedness primarily reflect social constructionist perspectives on embeddedness, whereas structural embeddedness is principally concerned with how the quality and network architecture of exchange relationships influence economic activity (Uzzi, 1997).

As Granovetter (1985) argues, economic action is embedded in the structure of social relations between actors including kinship links, and hence, the organizations operate embedded within a broad social nexus. On this basis, firms are embedded in local relationships, with competitors and suppliers in particular. These relationships can be simply ones of arm's-length exchange, as in traditional agglomeration models, or firms may have "fuzzy boundaries" where they share information, personnel, and equipment across their borders and engage in trusting rather than adversarial relationships (Markuzen, 1994). In this regard, embeddedness is seen as the degree to which firms are embedded in local economies through relationships with competitors, customers, suppliers, regional business organizations, and public-sector forums (Markuzen, 1994).

On these grounds alike, the event network embeddedness refers to either the overlap between social and economic linkages that influence event implementations and strategies or the nesting of event-related linkages within other social relationships. In this context, actors' behaviors are embedded to the extent that they tend to deal with partners who have common interests, or if their exchange partners tend to deal with each other. This means practically that sport and special event organizations must be embedded in the socio-political and cultural structures of a community having actual functions and authorities. The structural embeddedness of the event network is shaped in this context

according to inter-agency arrangements that determine the character, quality and architecture of inter-organizational relationships and the event network as a whole.

Most importantly, the institutional embeddedness of the event network does not mean that event organizations should be included in the government structure as a bureaucratic appendage or as a vehicle of hegemonic interests of socio-political and economic elites. Rather, it means that the institutionalization of these entities, either in local government structures or in voluntary non-profit bodies, should give these organizations the “voice,” the power and autonomy to act on problems, distribute funds, design and implement policy programs. This could integrate sport and cultural events under the same umbrella and take out these organizations from the isolated position they often have. In turn, political embeddedness of event organizations should incorporate them on core policies and political processes. Finally, cognitive and cultural embeddedness are more abstract since they pertain to the extent to which event organizations are embedded in the socio-cultural value system and social processes of a community.

### **Inter-organizational Reciprocity**

On the basis that sport and special event organizations are embedded in the social structures and are recognized and respected by other formal organizations, it would be easier for a host community to achieve common utilization of resources, facilities, skills, knowledge and human labor when it comes to organize its diverse array of events included in an event portfolio. In a nutshell, this means that different organizations could help each other and have access to information and resources in the hosting of events. Thus, the event network could be a space for the generation of social capital for formal organizations by fostering relationships of trust, mutual recognition and obligation. Inter-

organizational linkages could encourage collaboration and reciprocity that supports joint decision-making and problem solving in event implementations and joint strategies. In general, if the formation of inter-organizational relationships is based on reciprocity pursuing common or mutually beneficial goals or interests, then cooperation and coordination among organizations can be fostered seeking balance, harmony, equity, and mutual support (Oliver, 1990). Accordingly, there is potential for cultivating synergy that combines the perspectives, resources, and skills of all organizations (Lasker et al., 2001).

### **Event Integrity**

Events are both expressive practices with civic value and collective products with commercial value. For this reason an event portfolio can be viewed as a platform of assorted products that add civic or economic value to each other. The integrity that characterizes the core of their essence and peripheral activities as well as implementation processes may add distinctive value to a series of events. For tangible commercial products, integrity is much broader than basic functionality or technical performance. Since consumers expect products to harmonize with their values and lifestyles, the extent to which a product achieves this balance is a measure of its integrity (Clark & Fujimoto, 1990). Product integrity has both an internal and an external dimension. Internal integrity refers to the consistency between a product's function and its structure. External integrity refers to the consistency between a product's performance and customers' expectations (Clark & Fujimoto, 1990).

Similarly, the integrity of an event portfolio refers to the consistency of all events expressing authentic community values and responding to participants' needs. Such a consistency should be maintained in the planning, design and implementation of the different events by setting the same quality standards. The internal dimension means that

events should seek to have consistent cultural fit with the host community. Organizationally, internal integrity across the event portfolio can be achieved mainly through inter-organizational coordination within the event network. Efforts to enhance internal integrity should be at the core of every policy by event organizers and host communities when organizing an event portfolio. The external dimension of event integrity means that event implementation must consistently seek to meet the expectations of participants. Similarly, external integrity should be at the core of every effort by event organizers and host communities to accommodate and satisfy the needs of potential audiences across an event portfolio.

### **Participatory Inter-connectedness**

Event organizers should seek to provide opportunities for event participants and volunteers for esoteric development and for (re)constructing a shared meaning through enhancing the social networks involved in the organization of events. Within this context, relationships should be fostered among event organizers, volunteers and participants to create more meaningful and deep social ties. Since an event portfolio may comprise events with different themes and activities appealing to diverse target markets, in the same line, the input from community for these events should seek to involve volunteers from diverse segments of the host community's population. Such an approach may mobilize residents to volunteer for the organization of events, by making them feel as an integral part of the events, which may facilitate them wanting to make events better. In turn, this connects events with social development and may contribute to the revitalization and enhancement of social capital.

Participatory inter-connectedness across an event portfolio may increase the social value of events enhancing the realm of civic engagement. The extent to which

autonomous individuals participate in creating their leisure, rather than simply consuming it, the more likely it is that the resulting social capital will contribute to strong citizenship (Hemingway, 1999). Thus, it may be possible to generate transferability of the social capital events to active citizenship through hosting events. The link between social capital and citizenship lies in the norms of behavior, the set of socially constructed practices learned in one context and then generalized to other contexts (Glover & Hemingway, 2005).

Connections among individuals and the social networks and norms that arise from them will be more powerful when embedded in a dense network or reciprocal social relations (Putnam, 2001). Reciprocity exists not as a general cultural norm, but rather as an expectation attached to membership in a specific network (Glover & Hemingway, 2005). The creation and maintenance of social capital depends on the creation and maintenance of social ties by building relationships among people. What really matters is not merely nominal membership but active and involved membership (Putnam, 2001). The positive consequences of sociability (Portes, 1998) can be leveraged by enhancing the participatory inter-connectedness throughout events in a portfolio. Leisure can be a significant arena for the sociability on which social capital depends (Green & Haines, 2002; Rohe, 2004). Therefore, an event portfolio has the potential to provide opportunities for more unfettered social interaction and the creation of potentially richer social ties in which social capital can be generated.

### **Implementation Parameters**

The existence and cultivation of organizational antecedents in an event network does not by itself enable to strategically organize an event portfolio with an integrated policy mindset. There are implementation parameters that influence the core and

periphery of integrated strategic planning. These constitute a multi-layered conceptualization and manifestation of the multiple realities that shape a host community. Hence, they need to be understood and addressed in order for the network to maintain a holistic, integrated approach. This may be based on an integrative internal logic that assembles diverse event stakeholders in the portfolio and establishes its overall purpose. The implementation parameters for the strategic planning of an event portfolio are the following: functionalist scope, dialectical expressivity, symbiotic polymorphism, and resource inter-changeability. Each is described below.

### **Functionalist Scope**

Functionalism is the driving force that may bring together an event policy network where event stakeholders can meet their individual interests by accomplishing a collective purpose. Functionalist scope is the common sense of purpose that guides the event strategies and legitimizes pertinent policies. It is an expression of the host communities' needs and problems and its conscious effort to utilize different events for a defined set of purposes. The policy universe defines the purposes but since events require participation of the whole community, the effectiveness of policies to use events depends on the extent to which the functionalist scope is understood and relates to the vast majority of the host community. When this happens, it is easier for stakeholders of different events in the network to work together towards the accomplishment of a common purpose. In other words, functionalist scope is the unifying factor that puts an event network to work by bringing event stakeholders together from different policy communities to use events for the same purpose.



### **Dialectical Expressivity**

Existential concerns are the grounding essence that may permeate a series of events in order to make an event portfolio something more than the functional appendage of a host community's policy universe that serves its respective policy purposes. Dialectical expressivity refers to the set of meta-languages that event participants communicate through the series of events symbolically enunciating a dialogic meta-voice on issues of existential nature. Thus, events appeal to the existential needs of their participants and a host community at large. The expressive practices that take place in events help to continue the ongoing metaphoric discourse in the host community. This allows a community to express itself symbolically through the variety of events appealing to audiences with different interest. In turn, this metaphoric expression affirms, contests or transforms social conditions. In a nutshell, the dialectical expressivity conveys a set of meta-messages that frame a metaphoric dialogue through a series of events. This purports to say what constitutes the community and reflects the network of stakeholders that are involved in events. As long as the dialectical expressivity represents all the event stakeholders who are in the network, the implementation of joint strategies for different events within the portfolio is possible since these can be grounded on deep existential needs and concerns.

### **Symbiotic Polymorphism**

A relativist perspective provides the relational linkage that may connect a series of events and their stakeholders to be in mutual relation with one another. Symbiotic polymorphism refers to the salubrious and sustainable multiformity of events in the portfolio that links different event elements, functional domains and metaphoric meanings into a coherent community and event policy network. The different elements of

events may coexist with a core of common elements that are found in different events. These can help establish continuities between different events while appealing to diverse target audiences. They can also reinforce polysemy as they exist in a series of events and can challenge people to instantiate the meaning of events. In this respect, the relational semantic essence of events may connect people's experiences through a central idea and the themes that the events have. In essence, the different themes, elements, and subsequent target audiences shape the polymorphism of an event portfolio. The common elements and relational meanings make the symbiosis happen within the portfolio and event policy network where different event stakeholders take part.

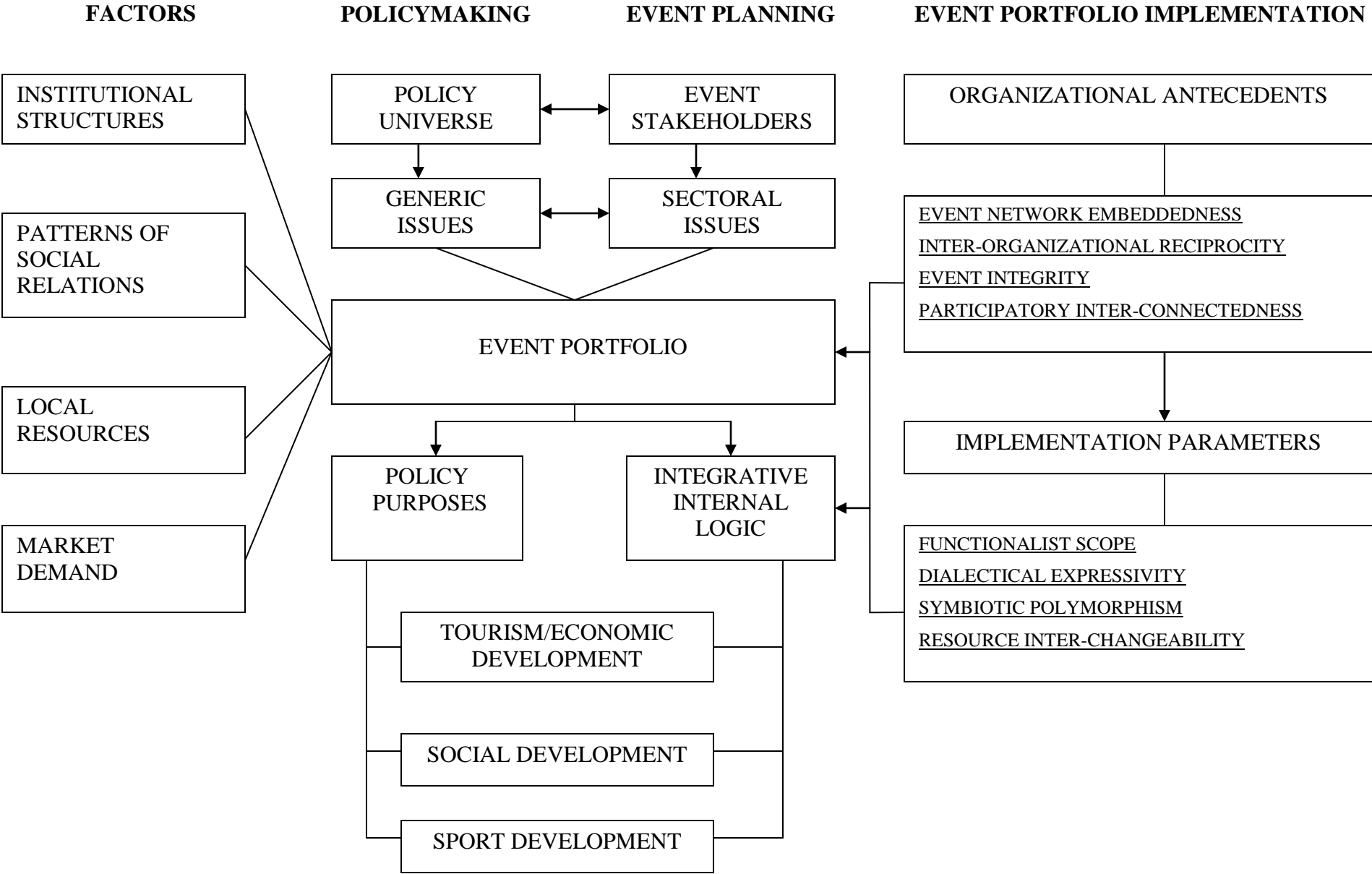
### **Resource Inter-changeability**

Managerialism provides the set of methods necessary for the pragmatic regulation of a host community's resources to organize an event portfolio. Resource inter-changeability is the capacity of tapping into the same resources for different events within the portfolio and event network. This requires communication, flexibility and common understanding of resource inter-dependencies. The availability of scarce resources for a number of different events may put pressure on resource allocation and lead event stakeholders to conflicts. For this reason, the inter-changeability of resources among different events in the portfolio should be grounded on the functionalist scope, dialectical expressivity and symbiotic polymorphism that characterizes an event network and brings different stakeholders together. The understanding of multifaceted and intersecting purposes, interests and needs apparent in an event network is the basis that guides and facilitates the common utilization of a host community's scarce resources for organizing a series of events.

Figure 9.1 illustrates a model based on network configurations of factors, policy purposes, and organizational characteristics that influence event portfolio planning and implementation. Clearly, the complexity of this theorization needs further research with richer “data from the field” to thoroughly substantiate its claims and elucidate any doubtful aspects. Each of the presented concepts, ideas and viewpoints need further examination especially with regard to the strategic means and tactics that can be put in practice to accomplish event policy objectives. This framework is basically an initial conceptual model and needs to be elaborated on and/or modified according to any new realizations that will derive from further studies. This line of inquiry seeks to inform sport and special event organizers as well as host communities of the possibilities and tools that they can utilize to optimize benefits derived from event portfolios and to possibly prevent any unintended consequences.

The complexity of this research endeavor is very challenging, especially if we take into consideration the fragmented landscape of sport, recreation, arts and culture and the diverse array of special events that they represent, in many cases, with opposing values. But perhaps, here is where the core function of an event portfolio lies, bringing the different events of a host community a little closer and incorporating them into an inclusionary framework of self-representation and collaboration. This can provide the diverse segments of population a space for expression so that they can co-exist and understand each other, rather than being entrenched in logics of antipathies, polemics and isolation. The complexity of this endeavor begs for exploration. Specifically, it is critical to start identifying ways that can assist the integration of sport and special events in the leisure domain, and in turn embed events in the social structures as well as processes of host communities.

**Figure 9.1: A Network Model for Event Portfolio Planning**



## **CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR SOCIAL UTILIZATION OF EVENT PORTFOLIOS**

The endeavor to create and enhance the social value of events involves complex processes that may have ambivalent results even when strategic planning is applied. This is because aesthetic signs, performance and event implementations are perplexed within the web of social relations and interaction processes that are often shaped by the reproduction and/or contestation of power relations. As a result, a common phenomenon is the exploitation of proclaimed social benefits that derive from events to communities such as civic esteem, social inclusion, identity, etc. These are often merely legitimizations of elites (Sack & Johnson, 1996; Whitson & Macintosh, 1996), which use events to maintain their hegemonic status. Thus, a host community's predominant social order may plan the use of events in ways to preserve itself. In such a case, factional interests prevail and discrimination is maintained at the expense of subordinate groups. Therefore, in order to proactively avoid such a happenstance, policies for the social utilization of events should comprehensively take into account the processes for the development and maintenance of social order of a host community as they influence, and in turn, are influenced by the events.

Planning for achieving social outcomes, because of their innate nature, is a more convoluted strategic process than is the economic or tourism planning of events. Also, the proclaimed use of events for an array of bogus or vague social benefits has brought disbelief over the pragmatic potential of utilizing events to yield meaningful social outcomes. This is exactly the challenge that needs to be overcome. An event portfolio presents a strategic resource that if appropriately planned can enhance the social value of individual events. This requires a holistic understanding of the ways that the social, political, economic and cultural contexts are interlinked with the event portfolio. In turn,

it is critical how the event strategies and objectives impact the micro and meso social processes within the community. In other words, if an event portfolio is viewed as a social intervention, the question is at what level of community structure an intervention should aim to have outcomes.

Similarly, if an event portfolio is viewed as a social channel and strategic resource it is possible to function explicitly as an integration mechanism. Events could be synergized, strategies could be harmonized, resources could be coordinated, and policies could be integrated. Event organizers and host communities that are interested in using events as a means for meaningful community development could explore avenues towards integrating sport and special events into a sound basis for the revitalization and sustainable development of host communities. It seems that in the context of an event portfolio such a basis can be developed. For example, a strategy for magnifying the social value of events can be the use of continuities to nurture connected sacredness among different events that will enable social interaction and a heightened sense of celebration to all the events of the portfolio. Similarly, another strategy could be to use different events to address and improve the social issues that agonize a community. The affective meanings, symbols and narratives of events can convey messages capable of permeating through a series of events and enhance their impact on people.

The process by which an event portfolio may impact the social fabric of a host community needs to be better understood. In particular, an event portfolio conveys symbolic interpretations of the public discourse, which in turn affirms, transforms or contests the social order. Thus, event roles are those of affirmation, transformation and contestation (Handelman, 1990). The public discourse may create tensions for the social order and a continuous negotiation implicitly takes place in the social domains. The

symbolic and polysemic meanings of events influence indirectly the negotiation by proposing and creating social conditions. Using Handelman's (1990) typology, events can model (transform), present (mirror) or represent (contrast) the social order. The event meanings and the respective outcomes they derive may vary such as identity, cohesion, social capital, equity, quality of life and cultural ideology. These meanings surround event implementations with importance and the success of an event may derive the respective outcomes to the particular realm of social life that its meaning refers to. It is not hard to understand that in an event portfolio, a desirable number of these meanings can be deliberately planned and cultivated. What needs attention is the ways that the meanings associated to different events be synergized to optimize the desired social outcomes.

The consideration of the wider context where an event portfolio operates in constitutes the framework for guiding event planning and implementation. The enactment of events offers a space for the negotiation of tensions that exist in the discourse and social order. The result of this negotiation shapes suggestive social conditions. The negotiation is the epicenter that event organizers and host community policymakers could target to intervene in the planning of social uses of events. The objectives of social utilization could be set in order to fit the public discourse and influence the negotiation for maintaining or reframing the social order for the common good. In other words, social utilization could seek to instill desired social effects on the nature and content of the discourse that in turn cements the public mind-set.

The objectives for social planning and utilization of events are three-fold: to substantially connect people by fostering social interaction and sociability, to symbolically re-create social relations and interpreting social conditions, and to celebrate

aspects of central importance for a group or a host community. The means for accomplishing these objectives are interrelated and can be used in unison for achieving other objectives. The primary means for fostering social interaction and sociability is through the creation of social activities. These can be social “mixers” for event participants or attendees (inside or outside the venue) and informal social opportunities that enable social engagement (Chalip, 2006).

Events can be occasions that bring together and (re)interpret various symbolic elements of social existence of a group or community with the effect of re-creating social relations and the symbolic foundations underpinning everyday life (Turner, 1974). The primary means for re-creating social relations and interpreting social conditions is symbolic theming. To foster a sense of meaning, symbolic elements can be layered throughout event spaces, embedded genres may add fascination and a sense of rejoicing while narratives that portray fundamental existential issues can be created to capture public interest (Chalip, 2006). Theming should foster and reinforce the felt sense of meaningfulness that those who attend the event obtain but also should signal and enhance the celebratory atmosphere that surrounds the event (Chalip, 2006). Yet, the primary means for amplifying a sense of celebration is through ancillary events. The arts can be useful complements to events by enhancing the celebratory atmosphere (Garcia, 2001) and adding more sophistication to the events (Chalip, 2006).

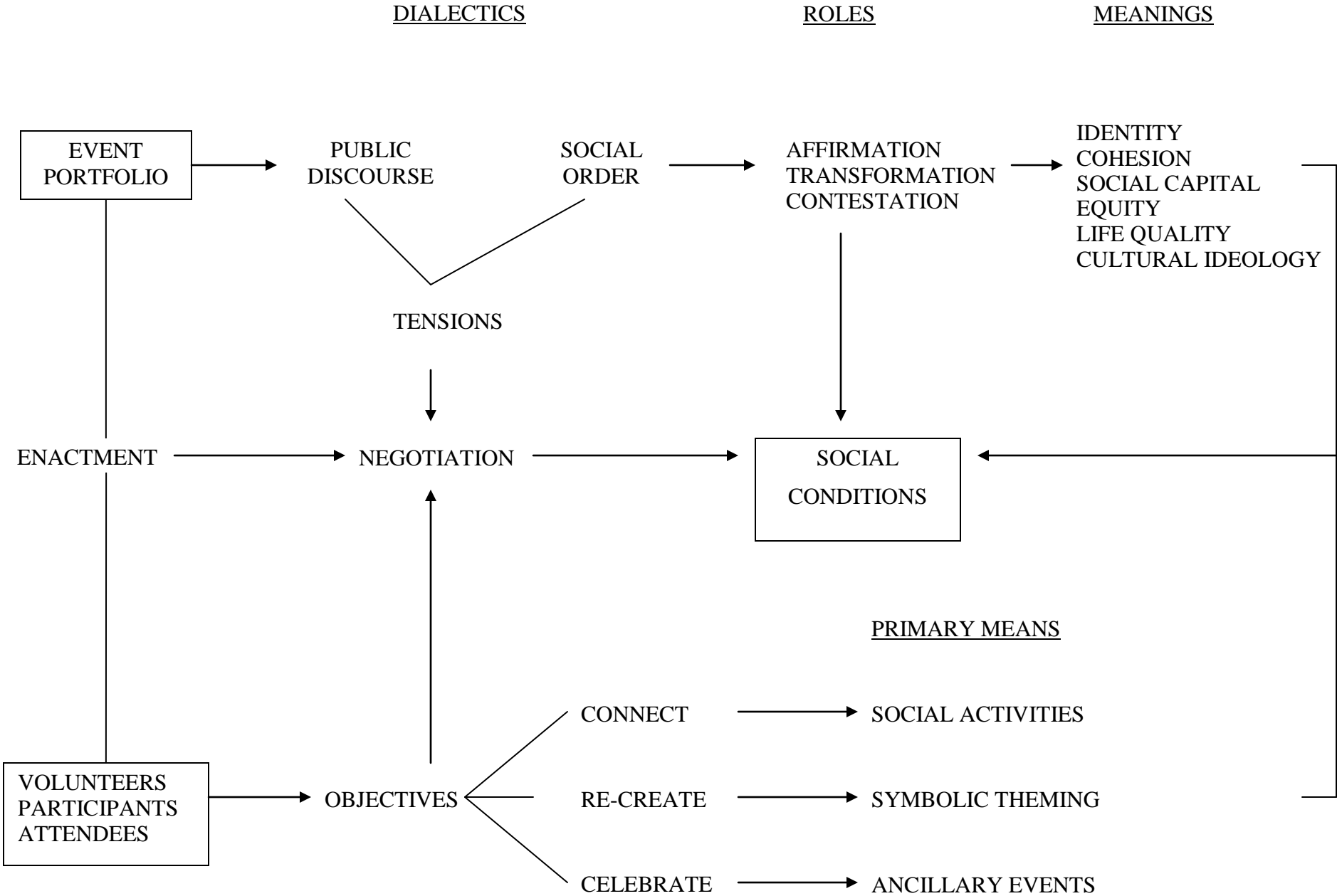
An event portfolio embedded in the social context has the potential of being an effective mechanism of integration and social utilization of events. The model in figure 9.2 illustrates a conceptual framework that places social planning and event portfolio utilization within the context of social processes that are interlinked with it. It is proposed that strategic planning for events, before setting objectives and seeking the appropriate



means, should consider the wider context with the linkages and interdependencies that may impact the planning and implementation of event strategies. From this standpoint, objectives and strategies should fit with the community discourse and address the tensions in the on-going social negotiation by projecting the appropriate meanings.

There is a great deal that needs to be learned in this line of inquiry. In particular, there is a need to identify the fitting means to capitalize on event meanings and then use the social effects that the events enable. There is a need to identify and elaborate an inclusive set of strategies for social utilization of events that is integrated in the general policy of a host community. There is a need to further understand the roles that sport events may have within an event from a social planning and utilization standpoint. There is also a need to understand the ways and the conditions that the commercial elements of events can support social planning and utilization of events. Finally, there is a need to identify, isolate and control any spill-over effects of social planning and utilization that cause unintended consequences to host communities.

Figure 9.2: Model for Social Utilization of Event Portfolios



## **IN-BETWEEN EVENT DRAMATURGY**

The development of events that merge two or more genres creating a unique synthesis of new hybrid event forms that “stand between” different genres merits attention in event design and management. Such hybrid events can be characterized as “in-between” (Briggs & Bauman, 1992). For example, McAloon (1984) described the synthesis of events in the frame of Olympics as ramified performance types that “stand between” the fragmentation of liminoidality into liminal genres and the development of neo-liminal genres out of the liminoid. The cultivation of dramaturgy and manifestation of polysemy within and around such events may offer endless possibilities for the creation of hybrid events that blend different genres, create and enhance synergies between them and bring together groups of people or communities to celebrate, (re)interpret and (re)create the symbolic foundations that underpin their social order. This, however, requires a systematic understanding of dramaturgy as a process so that event managers and host communities can be offered the means to enhance the metaphoric elements of events that can help to accomplish social and economic purposes. Dramaturgy is often facilitated by liminality. It is in the liminal or liminoid space and time wherein norms and social boundaries are suspended and symbolic meanings are extracted.

Liminality is the grounding essence that may surround an event. In order to understand and cultivate this essence in the particular context of new hybrid events and of their varied effects to larger society, it could be heuristically useful to view liminality in echelons ranging from “weak effect” (liminoid) to “strong effect” (liminal). Lewis and Dowsey-Magog (1993) used the term neo-liminal as opposed to just liminal arguing that because of a high degree of individual variation, no special performative framework in a

large-scale society can be as integral to general daily life as similar frameworks can be among small-scale groups. In other words, the effect of neo-liminal events to the larger society is different from ritual events that are only liminal and have a totalizing effect on event participants. Compared with a ritual event, neo-liminality has a weaker effect on event participants and larger society since it involves a broader range of definitions to a larger scale of people. However, compared with liminoid events, which have a loose effect on event participants/attendants, neo-liminality has a stronger effect since it involves a stricter range of definitions to a smaller scale of people. Thus, neo-liminality stands between the liminal and liminoid in terms of their effect on event participants, audiences and society. In this regard, hybrid in-between event types and genre frames could be categorized according to their meaning, intention and pragmatic potential to have desired effects on small groups such as event participants or out of the event context on the larger society. From this perspective, in-between forms may oscillate from liminoid to liminal echelons. Event organizers and host communities may take a programmatic approach to discern and strategically plan the uses of liminality in events in order to achieve social purposes for the larger society.

To understand and delimit the emergence of dramaturgy as a process in hybrid in-between events, a comprehensive delineation is heuristically useful in specifying the participatory components, the formatted context, the dramaturgical stages and the typified outcomes of the process. This is described in figure 9.3. In this framework, it is defined as in-between event dramaturgy the symbolic “ritualization” of event participants and attendants in emerging forms that blend different genres in “in-between” forms and create meta-social spaces for the expression and/or negotiation of values, ideas or preconceived notions. This definition is not merely functional. While it caters for event design and

participatory composition it extends to the existential character in-between events may have through the metaphoric use of event elements and meanings in the construction of social order.

The participatory components of in-between event dramaturgy are traced in the social dynamics of the group. The importance of group is essential in dramaturgy because participation and enactment of social dramas is fundamentally a group experience. Social anthropology literature has identified two components of the group (Noyes, 1995): Network and community whose dynamic interrelation forms the group.

1. Network is the interpersonal interactions in which culture is created and moves (Noyes, 1995). The creation and enhancement of social networks may support the cultivation of symbolism and polysemy or extract certain meanings to a culture. Social networks in turn may support organizing genres that will convey and permeate particular values to a community.

2. Community is the social imaginary that occasionally emerges in performance. The sense of place is expressed through communally shared forms narrative, arts and performance (Noyes, 1995). These are elements and modes of expression that give particular forms to genres blending different characteristics of them in the context of in-between dramaturgy.

The formatted context of an event that can be characterized as “in-between” is shaped by genres blended together, hence creating new in-between forms. This blending can be creative and innovative, challenging eventually in terms of form, preconceived notions of constitutive social order and extending thus the boundaries of expressive practices through performance in events. In other words, the blending of genres offers the opportunity for combining multiple modes of performance and new means of expression.

According to Conquergood (1998) performance can be understood in multiple ways, including as mimesis (imitation); as poiesis (construction); as kinesis (movement). In this context, in-between events may facilitate a performance to become a form of mimesis, of poiesis, of kinesis, as a way of questioning the status quo through the exploring and enacting new means of expression.

In this context, performance itself in events can be dramaturgical. The construction of in-between dramaturgy entails a view of performance as struggle, as an intervention, as breaking and remaking, as blending, exploring and rediscovering, as a meaningful sociopolitical act. Viewed as struggles and interventions, performance events may become transgressive achievements, political accomplishments that break through sedimented meanings and normative traditions (Conquergood, 1998). Moreover, the act of performing intervenes between experience and the story told (Langellier, 1999). This is important for the experience event participants and attendants may have because the way a performance is done describes performative behavior. Performativity refers to the power of discourse to reproduce the phenomena that it regulates and constrains (Butler, 1993). In other words, it is the “doing” (or performing) while the “done” (or text) is the performance. The interplay of performing and performativity (text) is what shapes the meaning and typified outcomes of an event.

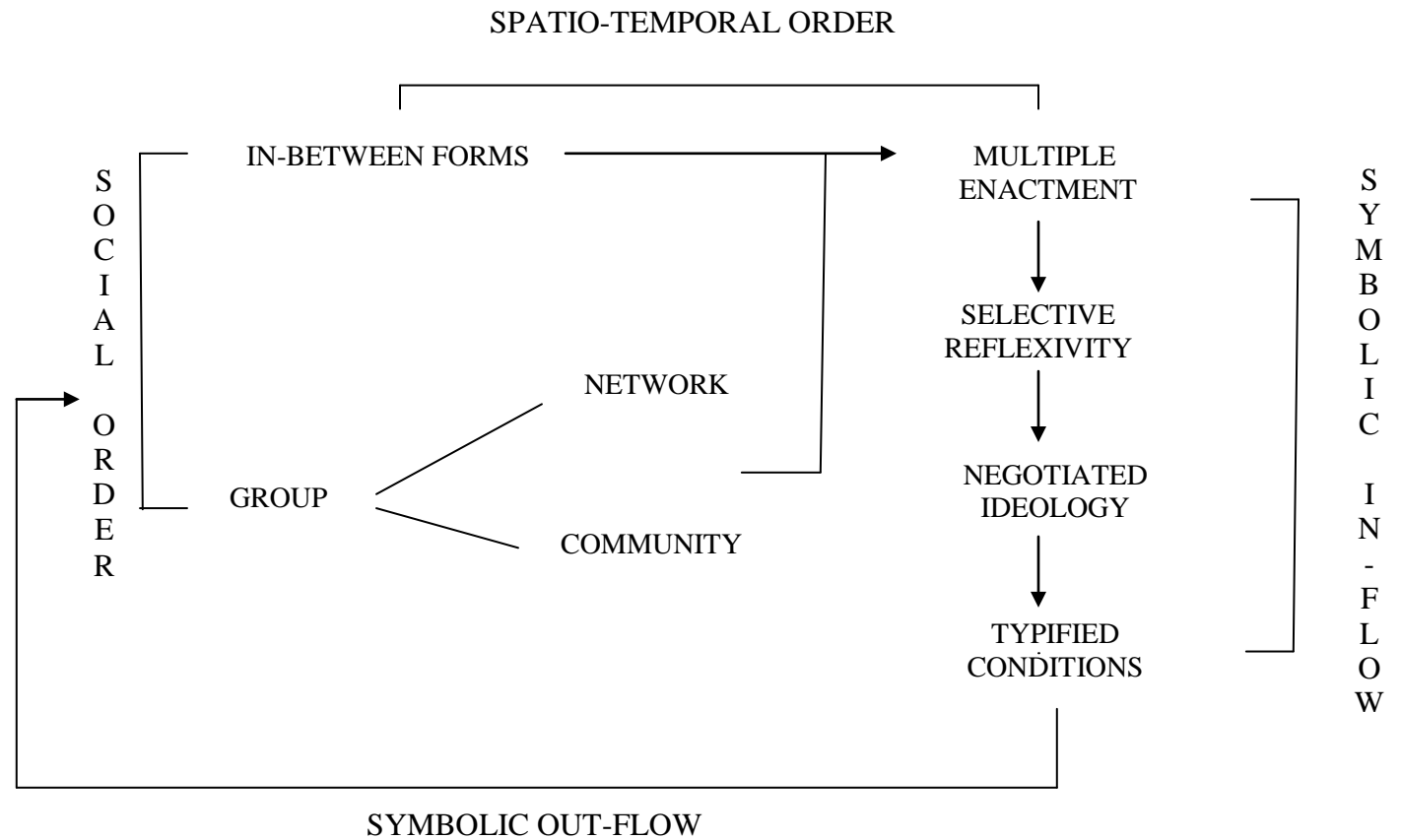
This formation can be explained through the dramaturgical stages that characterize the meanings and experience an event derives for participants and host communities. In this regard, the public sense of spatio-temporal order is manifested as sequenced pieces of interaction that depend on the design of the event. For example, in small communities event participants reproduce and express their own sense of place and inextricably their own understandings of who and what they are (Derrett, 2003; Basso,

1996). In-between event dramaturgy can be viewed as a prudently constructed sequence, the arrangement of which is both intentional and constitutive of its functionality as meaningful and social.

The sequential stages of in-between dramaturgy start with multiple enactment that allows the performance of manifold expressive practices in many combinations and means of expression. This may enable event participants and attendants to be critically reflexive since it allows examination of reflexivity at more levels. It evokes discourse and negotiation over what is and what should be acceptable within the event and as a metaphor to the society at large. Accordingly, event organizers and host communities select themes that facilitate the kind of reflexivity that fits and responds to the public discourse. Reflexive discourse may lead to the formation of a suggested viewpoint that can be characterized as the negotiated ideology derived from an event. In turn, this viewpoint is cemented as the event's meaning and message, which influences the (re)construction of social order by typifying social conditions. The symbolic in-flow of dramaturgical stages within the event and the symbolic out-flow of events influencing social order can be viewed as a process of adjusting the sequential streams of inner and outer flows that bring event stakeholders and the host community into conjunction with one another.

While abstract, the dramaturgical stages can serve as a conceptual starting point or grounding frame of reference for understanding what is going on within dramaturgy as a process, how event participants perceive their experience and how meanings are constructed as well as extracted. Each of these questions warrants future research that has directly practical implications for how to create and use dramaturgy in hybrid in-between events and other genres in general in order to increase their social value.

**Figure 9.3: In-Between Event Dramaturgy**





## EVENT PORTFOLIO DESIGN

The design of an event portfolio is the primary task for a host community that plans to organize a series of events. It entails the strategic decision-making regarding what events will be included based on a rationale for why they should be included. It involves the meticulous account of the constitutive factors that have an impact on event portfolio, what event characteristics should be enhanced within the portfolio, and what event strategies to be followed. On this basis, tactical market and logistical decisions can be taken. The central question concerns the composition of the event portfolio. Its nature, character and context are determined primarily by what events are included in the portfolio. The interplay of constitutive factors, policy purposes and objectives, driving forces and market, logistical as well as tactical decisions shape the composition of an event portfolio that manifests in event characteristics and marketing plans as figure 9.4 illustrates.

It is proposed that the design of an event portfolio should be grounded on an internal logic that legitimizes the portfolio in a host community and brings together various event stakeholders. The internal logic is the grounding essence of a well-embraced semantic context that a host community seeks to process and exemplify through events. This can be traced to matters of existential, historical, political and cultural particularities of a region. The fundamental step for event portfolio design is the establishment of the portfolio's pivotal intention. This can be accomplished by defining the portfolio's overall, global purpose, which will serve as a guiding tenet for ensuing strategic and tactical decisions. On this basis, a set of particular aims can be developed and appropriate tactics as well as means identified to accomplish the strategic objectives of the event portfolio.

There is a plethora of driving forces that influence and shape the set of particular aims and subsequent decisions in event portfolio design. Community issues and respective policy purposes, wider socio-economic processes, public discourse, political and ideological stimuli as well as leadership of key actors are only some of them. It is important that when an event portfolio is designed, event organizers and host communities be reflexive and question the nature, meaning and consequences of the driving forces that influence the design of a portfolio. This can help fit events in the ongoing discourse of a host community, and in turn, set objectives and implement strategies for a series of events to have intended outcomes that respond to the constitutive elements and respective agents of driving forces.

The primary criteria for deciding what events should be included in the portfolio are the constitutive factors, and strategic aims as well as objectives. The constitutive factors that should be taken into account in event portfolio planning are local resources, demand, competition, and contingency. Based on these factors a host community could consider what types of events are appropriate to be included in its portfolio. Local resources entail the unique assets of a host community and their availability as well as the supporting infrastructure (human and material) that can support the organization of events. Demand refers to the existence of markets or potential audiences for events. Competition refers to the existence of substitute products within the host community or other events in neighboring communities. Last but not least, contingency involves the range of situational or serendipitous factors that can influence not only event organization but also event interest, attendance and participation. These can vary from macro-level processes such as environmental and socio-economic changes to micro-level factors such as accidents or other unexpected incidents happening within the context of events.

The global purpose and aims of the portfolio guide the formulation of particular objectives and subsequent strategies. Each of the strategies can be used for one event or different events synchronously in conjunction with each other so that all complement and reinforce the other. Events may be used as part of a portfolio in the following ways:

- Events as attractions: This strategy uses events as vehicles for tourism development. An event is the primary reason for visiting the host destination and it is leveraged for economic benefit. Besides attracting visitation, events can be used to entice visitor spending, lengthen visitor's stays, retain visitor's expenditure in local community and enhance business relationships (Chalip, 2004). Also events can be used in marketing communications to promote the host destination's image and brand (Chalip & Costa, 2005).
- Events as focal practices: This strategy mainly uses events as avenues for community development. An event becomes a safe space for the cultivation of shared meaning and identity, development of meaningful social relationships and expression of metaphoric discourse on contentious political or existential matters. Leverage aims to increase the social value of the event by prompting a feeling of celebration and fostering social interaction (Chalip, 2006). The sociability and the meanings an event conveys can create and enhance social capital and lead toward meaningful collective action. Liminality and the associated communitas provide the context where events become valid forms that mediate persons into collective abstractions by inducing action, knowledge and experience. Events become forms that select out, concentrate, and interrelate themes of existence or public discourse. Events become devices of praxis that merge horizons of the ideal and the real to bring into close conjunction ideology and practice, attitude and action

(Handelman, 1990).

- Events as features: This strategy uses events as complementary characteristics of a host community that add value, enhance civic esteem or enrich recreational options. An event serves as a concrete illustration of the host community's attributes and it is used to complement economic or social purposes. The secondary status of events in this strategy does not imply that they are trivial but that they have limited capacity to reach wide markets and potential audiences. Their salience can be appealing to small markets, which present particular aspects of a host community and can improve its image. In this regard, events can be used to provide concrete representation of attributes and benefits that the host community seeks to promote about itself.

It is proposed that the strategic decisions that need to be taken for events in a portfolio are the following:

- Reach: What target markets does the host community wish to reach? Market segmentation and the selection of target audiences can be as diverse as the variety of events that are included in the portfolio.
- Frequency: How often events should be organized? The rate of recurrence must respond to market demand and sufficiency of local resources so that it does not cause market saturation or exhaustion of resources.
- Quantity: What should be the optimal number of events in the portfolio? An equilibrium for the optimal number of events is required to make sure that a host community does not exceed its capacity to host events and that there is no oversupply of events in the market.
- Placement: When events should be organized? The timely organization of events

requires that they should be placed in the portfolio so that they do not conflict with each other or other major circumstances in the host community. Common wisdom places events so that some time passes between events, there are suitable weather conditions and other happenings in the community, while off-peak timing or seasonality considerations are equally important.

- Fit: How can the different events match and be harmonized? Connectivity between events may enhance the value and meanings they convey and build the identity and/or “personality” of an event portfolio. The use of common elements, themes, narratives, and symbols as well as conceptual or activity continuities are some means that can be used to cultivate a common character and logic that the series of events is grounded.

The composition of an event portfolio manifests in generalizable event characteristics, which underlie and help to constitute a series of events. These features alone are neither the significance nor the meaning of single events. Instead they contribute to the continuity of meaning or fit among a series of events and they should be strategically planned and cultivated in order to optimize the synergy and harmonious functioning of the event portfolio. The event characteristics can be thought of in a linear axis with opposing values on its edges. The issue then is to balance the degree to which the event characteristics could embrace the opposing values of this continuum in order for events to fit with each other and accomplish their strategic objectives. In other words, balancing the event characteristics means regulating the composition, character and nature of the event portfolio. The event characteristics are the following:

- Formality: The extent to which standard procedures, activities and communicative scope are embraced in events as opposed to spontaneity. The opposing values are

standardized vs. amorphous.

- Replicability: The replication of entire events or certain event elements. The opposing values are mimetic vs. novel.
- Intentionality: The extent to which the procedures, activities and communicative scope are intended to achieve certain objectives through an event. The opposing values are purposive vs. unintended.
- Polysemy: The symbolic formation of meanings, which in Handelman's (1990) terms is a location of communication that conveys participants into versions of social order in relatively coherent ways. Different events are put together to communicate comparatively well-honed messages. The issue is the extent to which the symbolic meanings are innate in the context of an event or are being constructed by event organizers and the host community. The opposing values are organic vs. artificial.
- Connectivity: The extent to which events are connected in multiple or a few ways. The opposing values are repetitive vs. varied.

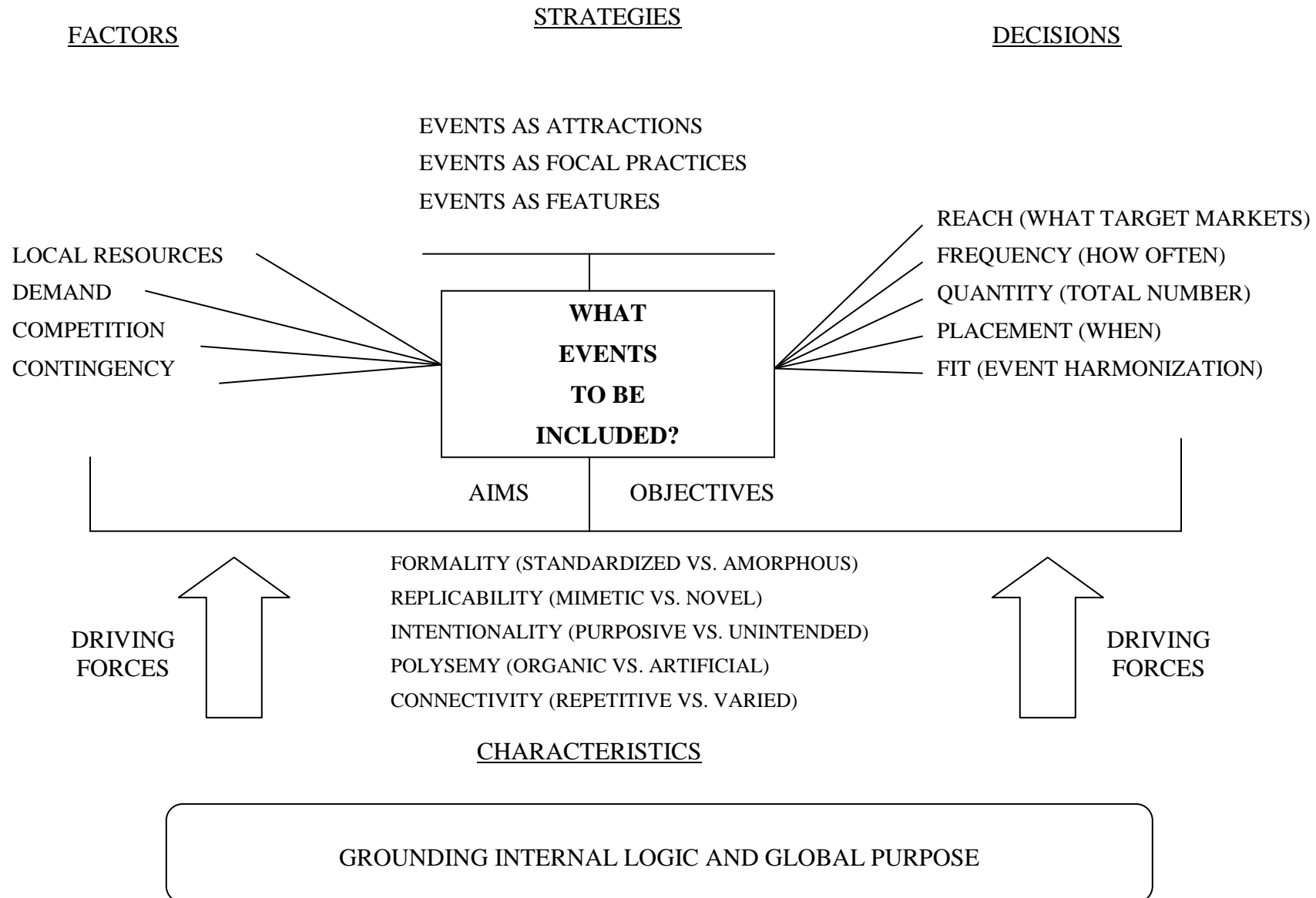
According to Handelman (1990) events are constituted through their intentionality (their design, or structure) and through their practice (their enactment or performance). The formation of events can be analyzed through the identification of the likelihood that certain operations are being accomplished. This calls for a technology of events and the cultural networks that imbue the meaning and significance of events (Handelman, 1990). Although anthropologists who thoroughly studied events would not favor a functional analysis of events, it is ironic that their work calls for a technology of events and understanding the logics of their design. Similarly, a technology of event portfolio design is imperative not only in functional but also in cultural terms. Thus, future research

should focus on developing such a “technology” by examining more closely all the aforementioned interrelated aspects of their design.

Event design is never static nor complete. It is a dynamic process, which constantly evolves and adjusts according to contextual changes. The examination of such a dynamic process merits attention in the context of an event portfolio. For example, future research should explore in what ways the configuration of potential dynamism can be expressed and/or reinforced through a series of events. Future studies should seek to identify concentric and centrifugal forces toward integration that impact event design. Also, there is a great deal to be learned regarding what would be the optimal composition, nature, and character of an event portfolio that serves a host community’s leverage objectives (i.e., reach, frequency, quantity, placement, and fit of events in the portfolio). Another area that needs examination is the role of sport events in relation with other events, and the role of sport as an event element in the portfolio. Similarly, the role of the arts and arts events needs to be thoroughly examined. Also, it would be particularly useful to identify the combination of event characteristics that enable event elements to support the portfolio’s strategic objectives.

Finally, future studies should explore how the status, richness and essence of event design is unfolded through a series of events that signifies order in the worlds of their different target audiences. This line of inquiry could seek to identify and distinguish event elements and characteristics as signifiers of meaning (i.e., denoting meaning) and referents of meaning (i.e., communicating meaning) with the purpose of understanding how to use them throughout the event portfolio in order to enhance its semantic essence.

**Figure 9.4: Event Portfolio Design**





## **DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

A number of directions for future research have already been identified while delineating the theoretical and practical implications that derive from this study. In essence, each theoretical framework warrants a fruitful line of inquiry that can shed light on the unexplored area of event portfolios. The holistic approach adopted and developed in this study provides a conceptual framework for exploring and building knowledge in this area. This approach places the network perspective at the core of understanding and examining event portfolio planning and implementation. From this perspective, insights can be framed and developed on the contextual and multiplex embeddedness of events, the integration of policies for economic and social use of events, and the development of synergies between sport and cultural events.

In particular, the study of event portfolio planning should seek to develop knowledge on how event portfolios can be embedded in social and political structures in order to illustrate the means for the incorporation of event portfolios into community development efforts. The factors that facilitate or impede the embeddedness of event portfolios need to be identified. Furthermore, a set of tactics needs to be developed for the cultivation and enhancement of event portfolio embeddedness. In this context, future research may examine as a system the network of organizations that support event portfolio management. It is essential to learn more about event network structure by examining different networks around the world in both urban and rural host communities. It is essential to have thorough insights into the ways that inter-organizational linkages and cooperation are fostered within event networks. It is also essential to have methodical

accounts of the ways social capital is generated in events and their supporting network and can be transferred out of the event context to other spheres of community life.

The study of event portfolio planning requires a focus on examining event interrelationships in order to understand the convergence or divergence of different events. Future research should explore the ways that different events can fit and be harmonized by identifying the means and strategies to achieve organic relatedness and instrumental connectivity among events. In this regard, future studies can identify event tactics and elements that can engender relatedness and connectivity among events within the portfolio. The emergence of in-between dramaturgy warrants further research in order to examine the antecedents and consequences that facilitate processes of event synthesis and augmentation. Similarly, future work in the planning for social utilization of event portfolios needs to examine the ways that different events can jointly foster and amplify a sense of celebration and social interaction thereby increasing the social value of the event portfolio. Future studies should also identify the means to capitalize on theming, narratives and ancillary event complementarities, and their implications on event portfolio design. Most importantly, the design of event portfolios warrants future research for investigating event aspects and elements in order to identify the bases and means to create and enhance synergies between the commercial and social value of events.

From a marketing standpoint, future research should continue to explore the ways that an event portfolio can be used in marketing communications of a host community. An event portfolio offers a number of opportunities for event organizers and host communities that if appropriately leveraged can yield substantial economic or social outcomes. For example, a strategically planned recurring series of events can reach diverse target markets that otherwise might not be reached, provide complementary

options for entertainment and spending and promote the host community consistently to the outside world. Thus, future research should examine the tactical base and patterns of appropriate strategies for event portfolios in marketing the host community.

There are also comparable knowledge gaps regarding the media uses of event portfolios (Chalip, 2005). Future studies should examine the best means to incorporate event promotion into the host destination's integrated communications strategy. Similarly, there are knowledge gaps regarding the strategic planning of event portfolios. Future research could investigate how the synergies between sport and cultural events can be cross-leveraged in strategies of local regeneration in urban versus rural areas. The critical question is: what would be the differences and their common elements? In the same regard, intercultural research should explore the use and applicability of event portfolios in different cultures.

From a community development standpoint, the apparent effort to create a community that is open and inclusive requires the involvement of people and the enhancement of social ties among individuals. Events as liminal or liminoid celebrations provide the space to (re)create shared meaning that can make people more active towards achieving common goals. This does not only facilitate the organization of events but also may enhance the citizenship and collaboration of individuals towards shared goals of a community. Hence, the building of inter-connectedness through events may be leveraged to develop cooperation and openness that will cement civic engagement. In this regard, future research needs to examine the extent to which events foster social networks thereby creating meaningful social ties among individuals. This line of inquiry needs to examine more tenaciously the means and conditions by which liminality and *communitas* are created. It also needs to identify the means for transferring the social capital generated

in events to other contexts of civic life. Towards that end, future work needs to shed light on how the membership, responsibilities and empowerment of volunteers in events may enhance the web of relationships that comprise a host community.

In examining a series of events during the course of a year, a pertinent line of inquiry for future studies would be to examine the intent and authenticity of dramaturgy in events and whether it is compatible with liminality and *communitas* or it is a byproduct of discursive regimes. The value of such an examination would be to suggest ways that events can be designed and implemented as well as institutionalized into the structures of a community without being vehicles for the promotion of parochial interests of economic and political elites. In other words, it would help to incorporate sport and cultural events into the cultural, socio-economic and political discourse for sustainable development.

In this context, therefore, sport is not viewed as an isolated domain but as part of the social world, able to play particular roles in relation with other domains and evolve accordingly. The emergence of event portfolios and event sport tourism as a means for economic and social development begs for such an integrated approach. The critical issue for sport and event management researchers is to develop a sophisticated framework for the incorporation of event portfolios into the sustainable development of host communities. This study's generated theoretical frameworks on general event portfolio planning, its social utilization, in-between event dramaturgy, and event portfolio design may guide such an endeavor and consequently they warrant further examination and elaboration.

## **Appendix A: Interview Questions**

### **EVENT VOLUNTEERS**

1. Why did you volunteer for this event?
2. What did you like or dislike about this event?
3. How do you see this event fit in with other events in the community? Is it different or similar to other events? Which ones? In what ways?
4. How did you see your involvement and contribution for the success of this event?
5. How was working with the event organizers?
6. Do you feel more involved in community after volunteering in this event?
7. What are those elements of the event itself that you feel proud to identify yourself with?
8. What was your interaction with the event participants?
9. Do you think that the event was a success and what could have been done better?
10. Do you volunteer more in sport or cultural events? Do you feel the same when you volunteer to each? What are those things that are the same or different?
11. Do you volunteer in events? How often? Do you volunteer along with friends or your family?

### **EVENT ORGANIZERS**

1. What were the factors that helped you to organize this event and what helped you most?
2. What were the factors that created obstacles in the organization of the event? In what ways did you overcome those obstacles?
3. What did you hope that people would like about this event?
4. How do you see this event fit in with other events in the community? Is it different or similar to other events? Which ones? In what ways?

5. What other public or private entities helped in the organization of this event and how was working with them?
6. How was working with the volunteers?
7. Do you feel more involved in the community as an event organizer?
8. What are those elements of the event itself that you feel proud to identify yourself with?
9. What was your interaction with the event participants?
10. Overall do you think that the event was a success and what could have been done better?
11. Do you also help to organize other events?

### EVENT PARTICIPANTS

1. Why did you participate in this event?
2. What did you like or dislike about this event?
3. What activities did you find most appealing?
4. What are those elements of the event itself that you feel proud to identify yourself with?
5. How do you see this event fit in with other events in the community? Is it different or similar to other events? Which ones? In what ways?
6. What was your interaction with the event staff?
7. Do you feel that this event promoted community unity?
8. How did you see everyone working together in this event?
9. Do you think that the event was a success and what could have been done better?
10. Do you participate in other events? How often? Why?
11. Do you participate more in sport or cultural events? Do you feel the same when you participate to each? What are those things that are the same or different?

## BUSINESS STAKEHOLDERS

1. Do you know if there were any activities that were undertaken by the community to leverage the event?
2. In what activities did you participate? How was working with the event organizers and City officials in leveraging the event?
3. What did you like or dislike about this event?
4. What are those elements of the event itself that you feel proud to identify yourself or your business with?
5. How do you see this event fit in with other events in the community? Is it different or similar to other events? Which ones? In what ways?
6. How did you see everyone working together in this event?
7. Do you feel that this event promoted community unity?
8. Overall do you think that the event was a success and what could have been done better?
9. Do you volunteer or attend the events in the community? Do you attend more sport or cultural events? What are those things that are the same or different?

## Appendix B: Event Network Survey Instrument

### Fort Stockton Special Event Network Survey - 2006

Department of Kinesiology & Health Education, University of Texas at Austin

Your organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Your position or job title: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Many organizations provide at least some services to assist in the organization of special events, even though such services and activities may only be a small part of the organization's mission. We would like to know the extent to which you view your organization's involvement in special events (planning, organizing, leveraging, etc.) as critical, or important, for accomplishing the **overall** mission of your organization. Please **circle** the number below that best matches your response.

My organization's involvement with special events is:

- 1 = not at all important/critical for accomplishing my organization's mission
- 2 = not very important/critical for accomplishing its mission
- 3 = neither important nor unimportant for accomplishing its mission
- 4 = important/critical for accomplishing its mission
- 5 = extremely important/critical for accomplishing my organization's mission

2. Listed below are organizations in Fort Stockton that we believe are involved in some way in the organization of special events. We would like to know the extent to which your organization is involved with, or linked to, the others on the list for providing a full range of services.

We have listed four types of involvement your organization might have with these other agencies. These include links through exchange of information, through shared resources (joint funding, shared equipment or personnel, shared facilities, etc.), or through any type of assistance (either sent or received or both) between your organization and the agency listed.

Please go through the list below and indicate which agencies **your** organization has been involved with for organizing special events of any type. Simply place a check (V) in the box that applies, to the right of that agency's name, but only for those types of links that occur **with some regularity** (not just an occasional link, for instance). Please indicate your involvement for **each** of the four types of relationships listed. If you had no **regular** involvement with an agency regarding shared information, shared resources, or assistance, simply leave the box or row blank for that agency.

In the last column, we would like you to rate the **overall quality** of the working relationship you have with each agency you have checked. For instance, can you trust the other agency to keep its word, to do a good job, and to respond to your organization's needs and those of its clients? To do this, please **circle the number** that best reflects relationship quality using the following scale: **1** = poor relationship (little trust), **2** = fair relationship (some trust), **3** = good relationship (trust), **4** = excellent relationship (high trust). Again, if you have no relationship with a listed agency, simply leave the cell blank.



At the end, please add any agencies we may have missed and indicate the types of links you had with them. Do this first for any agencies on Fort Stockton, then Pecos County, and then, for any agencies you may be involved with on national or international level. Again, focus only on agencies involved with special events.

ORGANIZATIONS/AGENCIES	TYPES OF LINKS (Check the box if you have this link)				Relationship Quality
	Shared Information	Shared Resources	Help Sent	Help Received	(Please Circle)
Chamber of Commerce					1 2 3 4
Hispanic Chamber of Commerce					1 2 3 4
Tourism Department (CVB)					1 2 3 4
Recreation Department					1 2 3 4
Library					1 2 3 4
Annie Riggs Museum					1 2 3 4
Historic Fort Stockton					1 2 3 4
Extension Office					1 2 3 4
School District (Athletic Department)					1 2 3 4
<b>Other Fort Stockton Organizations:</b> (please list and respond as above)					
					1 2 3 4
					1 2 3 4
					1 2 3 4
<b>Other Pecos County Organizations:</b> (please list and respond as above)					
					1 2 3 4
					1 2 3 4
					1 2 3 4
<b>Other National/International Organizations:</b> (please list and respond as above)					
					1 2 3 4
					1 2 3 4
					1 2 3 4
					1 2 3 4

Your answers to the question above will help us find out which agencies are linked to which other agencies for the organization of special events. However, we would also like to know something more about the nature of your involvement with some of these other agencies and groups.

1. First, we would like to know which **individuals** you believe are most important for ensuring that organizing special events and related recreational services are provided effectively in Fort Stockton. These individuals may be community leaders, the heads of voluntary organizations, committees, etc. who have been especially helpful in getting agencies to work together and for enhancing the effectiveness of services. Please list **up to five** (5) such key individuals along with the organizations or groups with which they are affiliated.

**Critical Individuals re: Organizing Events (and their organizational affiliation)**

- a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_
  - e. \_\_\_\_\_
2. Second, in the spaces below, please list **up to five** (5) agencies/organizations (from the list on this page) that you believe to be **most critical** for ensuring that your organization and others are able to do the best job possible in organizing special events, and related services within the Fort Stockton community. These may or may not be agencies with which you are currently involved.

**Critical Agencies re: Organizing Events**

- a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_
  - e. \_\_\_\_\_
3. Third, we would like to know which **civic groups** you believe are most important for ensuring that organizing special events and related recreational services are provided effectively in Fort Stockton. These groups may be voluntary groups, committees, or religious community groups, etc. that have been especially helpful in getting agencies to work together. Please list **up to five** (5) such key civic groups.

**Critical Civic Groups re: Organizing Events**

- a. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_
- d. \_\_\_\_\_
- e. \_\_\_\_\_

4. Finally, we would like to know what the **benefits** and **drawbacks** have been from cooperating with other agencies in organizing special events. For each possible benefit or drawback listed, please indicate, by placing a check in the appropriate box, whether **your** organization, through its involvement with other agencies, has already experienced the benefit/drawback, expects to experience it, or does not expect to experience it. Check (V) only one box for each benefit/drawback.

	Already Occurred	Expect to Occur	Do Not Expect to Occur
<u>Benefits:</u>			
a. Enhanced ability to serve my clients	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. Enhanced ability to serve the community as a whole	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. Acquisition of new knowledge or skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. Acquisition of additional funding or other resources	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e. Increased utilization of my organization's services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
f. Development of new, valuable relationships	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
g. Heightened public profile of my organization	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
h. Enhanced influence in the community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
i. Increased ability to shift resources to needed areas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
j. Other benefits (please list other major benefits):			
_____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
_____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<u>Drawbacks:</u>			
k. Diversion of time and resources from other activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
l. Loss of control/autonomy over decisions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
m. Strained relations within my organization	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
n. Frustration or aggravation in dealing with partners	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
o. Insufficient credit given to what my organization does	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
p. Other drawbacks (please list other major drawbacks):			
_____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
_____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## Appendix C: Water Carnival Association Members

### Diamond Membership:

Wallace Lumber Company  
Sadler & Associates, Century 21

### Century Membership:

Mr. & Mrs. Douglas Mitchell  
Card & Company CPA  
McKissack Tire Company  
Elliott & Waldron Abstract  
Clayton Williams Farms Co  
DA & Angela Harral & Family  
Mr. & Mrs. R.L. Dunagan Jr.  
Stockton Ford Inc.  
Pecos County State Bank  
Edward Jones - Sal Salazar  
City of Fort Stockton  
D. & L. Well Service  
Stockton Glass and Mirror  
Cuervo, Inc – Dale & Lori Stennett

### Fifties:

Permian Realty – B.L. Moody  
Dr. & Mrs. Hulon Pass  
Jerry & Jane Puckett  
Irene Burham  
Allan & Rita Childs  
Mr. & Mrs. Paul Pasqua & Family  
Holiday Inn Express  
Tammy Nelson Huckaby,  
Jhonalou, Tyler, Coleman  
Stoltz and Company Insurance –  
Clyde Sawyer  
Richard Bowles & Chris Peters  
Jimmy Stephens, Cindy Pherigo,  
Amanda, Kevin & Brian  
Todd & Melanie Guest

### Business:

First National Bank  
Remie's Body Shop, Inc.  
Nolen Pharmacy  
KFST AM/FM Radio  
Tedford Key and Lock

Rex's Boot & Shoe Repair  
Ft. Stockton Insurance Agency  
Guaranty Bond Bank  
Stadium Sports  
Pecos County Feed & Supply  
State Farm Insurance – David Hardwick  
Jay Chancellor Office Supply  
Pete & Betty Hickman –  
Century 21 Real Estate  
Wiest Tire, Inc.  
DirectBytes.com

### Honor:

Century Trailer – Scott Mooney  
Ken Johnson Family  
Cottage Collections  
Napa Auto Parts  
Jonell Brandon  
Lavonne Alexander  
Cliff & Pam Harris  
Frank & Mary Lea baler  
Polly L. Brooks  
Mr. & Mrs. Roy Armstrong  
Cathy, Bristi, Kasia, Flynt, Emily &  
Christian Havins  
Joel, Dolores, Lance, Lexie Luera  
Roger & Chris Puckett  
Jennifer & Gabe Gonzales  
R. L. Slack

### Family:

Charles Neeb & Family  
Dr. Cecil George & Family  
Jim Ivy Family  
Mr. & Mrs. Delmon Hodages & Family  
Dean & Alice Duerksen  
Gregg & LouAnn McKenzie  
Kenda, Lynzi, & Madison Furman  
Ilo Rauscher Family  
Mr. & Mrs. Ray Siegmund  
Sue Prock & Family  
Tracy & Stacy Pasqua & Family  
Pat & Aleatha Mayfield

Bob & Pat Gray & Family  
Charles & Teresa Ballard  
Dennis & Joyce Card  
Kyle, Glynetta, & Evan Card  
Clinton & Anna Reed & Family  
Armando & Diana Rangel & Family  
Jean Hoffman  
Snyder, Vicki, Rankin & Coleman  
Mitchell  
Gorman & Peggy Wiseman & Family  
Kelly J. & Sandra King & Family  
Eddie, & Brandie, Briana & Holly  
Granado  
Ronnie & Helen Roller  
Nathan & Tessa Schafer

Gerardo & Darla Pules  
Michael, Ashlee, Taylor & Luke Pules  
Mellessa Pules & Ricky Brenem  
Matthew, Katie, Bailee & Chandler  
Pules  
Terry, Vivian, Jeff, & JJ Hickman  
Jeremy, Desi, Elizabeth, & Alyssa  
Hickman  
Chris & Tracey Alexander & Evan Card

Individual:

Melanie Mckenzie O'Malley

Organization:

Laureate Epsilon Pi

## Appendix D: Chamber's Network of Committees

### 1. Economic Development Division

- Business Retention
- Workforce Education
- Entertainment Facility
- Shop Locally Campaign
- Hospitality Training
- Holiday Glitz
- Workforce Development
- Film Industry

### 2. Community Development Division

- Leadership Fort Stockton/Leadership Alumni: The committee works with the Leadership Alumni to continue to promote improvements and attendance in “Leadership Fort Stockton” training. This training is to be provided under the auspices of this committee.
- Youth Leadership Fort Stockton: The committee sponsors a Leadership program for seniors at Fort Stockton High School. They look at program enhancements for this program. The committee may seek input from John Ben Shepard Institute at UTPB and other leadership-training providers to help enhance the program.
- Ambassadors: The committee is under the director of the boss ambassador. They work on utilizing the ambassadors for membership recruitment and retention, and public relations.
- Trans-Pecos Friends of the NRA: The committee supports a yearly banquet under the title Trans-Pecos Friends of the NRA. The banquet profits help the Pecos County 4-H/Shooting sports participants.
- Women's Division: The committee supports the Fort Stockton Women's Division and encourages its efforts to enhance Fort Stockton.
- Health and Safety Expo: The committee works with the Pecos County Hospital and provides a day of exhibits and booths geared toward personal safety and health.

### Event Committees:

- 4<sup>th</sup> of July – This committee focuses on a 4<sup>th</sup> of July fireworks display and entertainment for the community.
- IHMSA - This committee focuses on having special entertainment during the weeklong tournament. It coordinates a social, banquet and work with historic Fort Stockton on entertainment.
- Concert in the Park Series - This committee hosts a 4 “Concerts in the Park.” It works with the “Summer off the Patio” to enhance their on-going activities. Possibly look at sponsoring a movie in the park series also.
- Christmas Open House: This committee hosts an open house for all Chamber members and the community.
- Silent Auction - This committee hosts an annual silent auction for all Chamber members and the community.

- Christmas Lighting Contest - This committee sponsors a decorating contest for the City of Fort Stockton. This year they will promote the “Desert Wonderland” theme.

### 3. Organizational Development Division

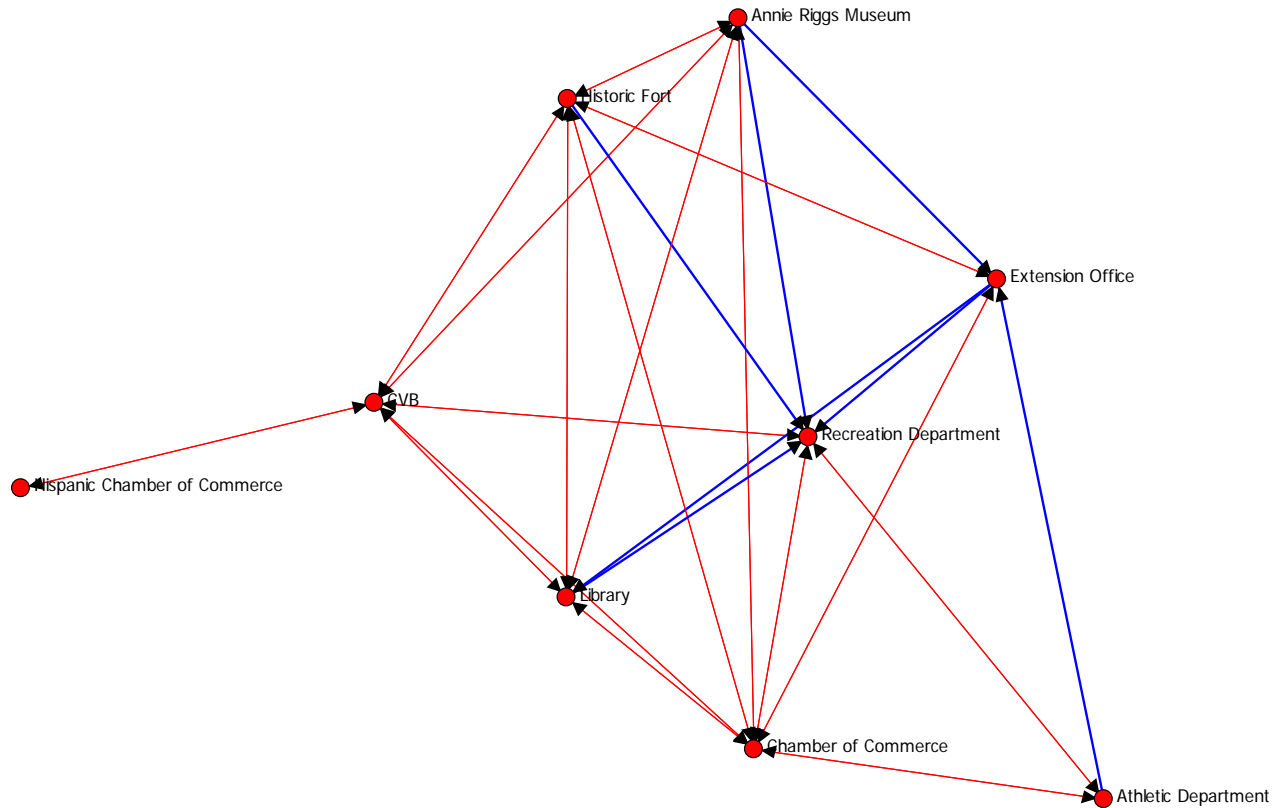
- Banquet
- Past President’s Committee
- After Hour Social
- Depot Enhancement

### 4. Board of Directors Focus Committees related to Special Events

- Special Events - This committee supports new and on-going projects for the City of Fort Stockton and Pecos County pending Board approval. Included in this committee is support for Sheep Dog Trials, Big Bend Open Road Race, Water Carnival, Harvest Fest and Living History Days.
- Sports Events Information – This committee works with the recreation and the school sports department on gathering information for sports events included hotel and motel rates, restaurants, and other community information.
- Sports Events Recruitment – This committee works with the recreation and school sports department on recruiting more sports events to Fort Stockton.

## Appendix E: Event Network Cohesion

### Network Ties for Shared Information



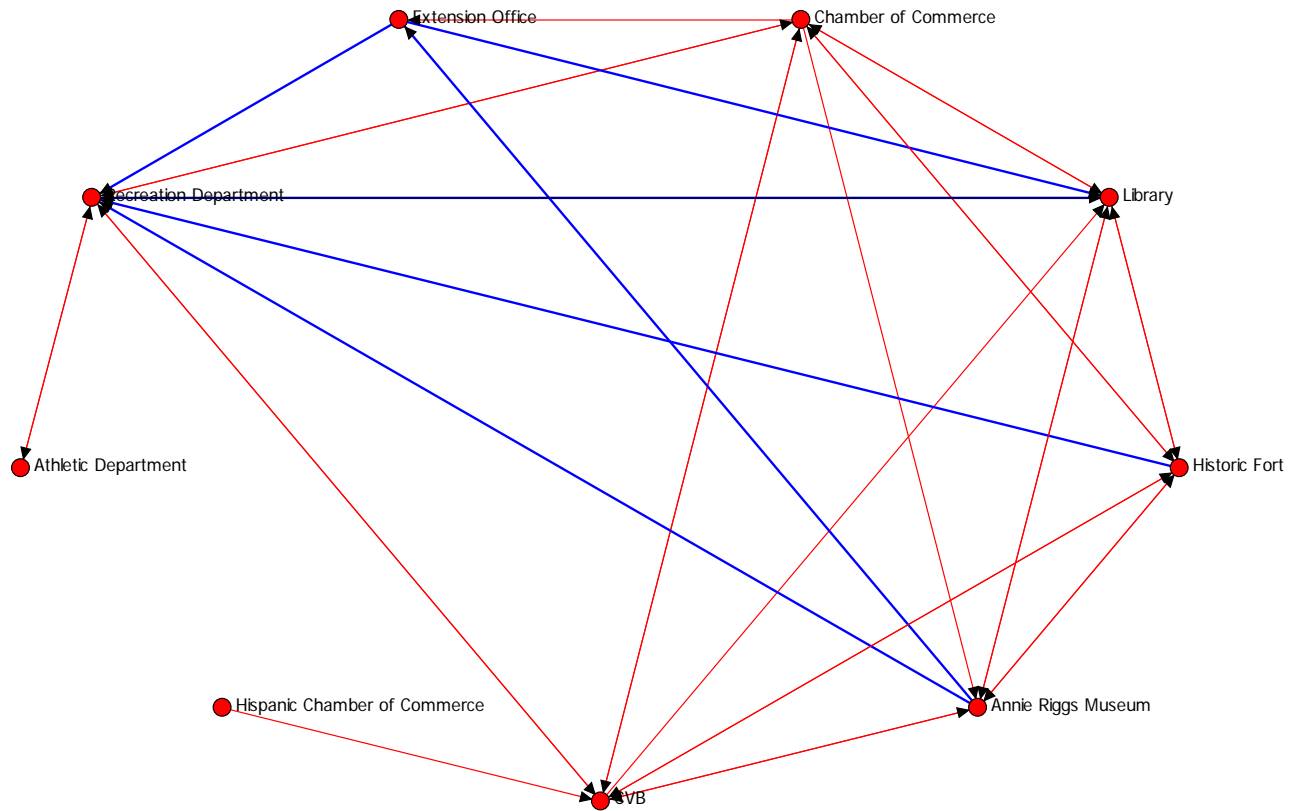
Note: Blue lines represent the reciprocal ties and the red lines represent the non-reciprocal.

### Node Reciprocity for Shared Information

Organization	Symmetric	Non-Symmetric	Out/N	In/No
Chamber	1.000	.000		
Hispanic Chamber	1.000	.000		
CVB	1.000	.000		
Rec. Dept.	.429	.571	.000	1.000
Extension	.333	.667	.500	.500
Annie Riggs	.667	.333	1.000	.000
Historic Fort	.833	.167	1.000	.000
Library	.667	.333	.500	.500
Athletic Dept.	.667	.333	1.000	.000



## Network Ties for Shared Resources

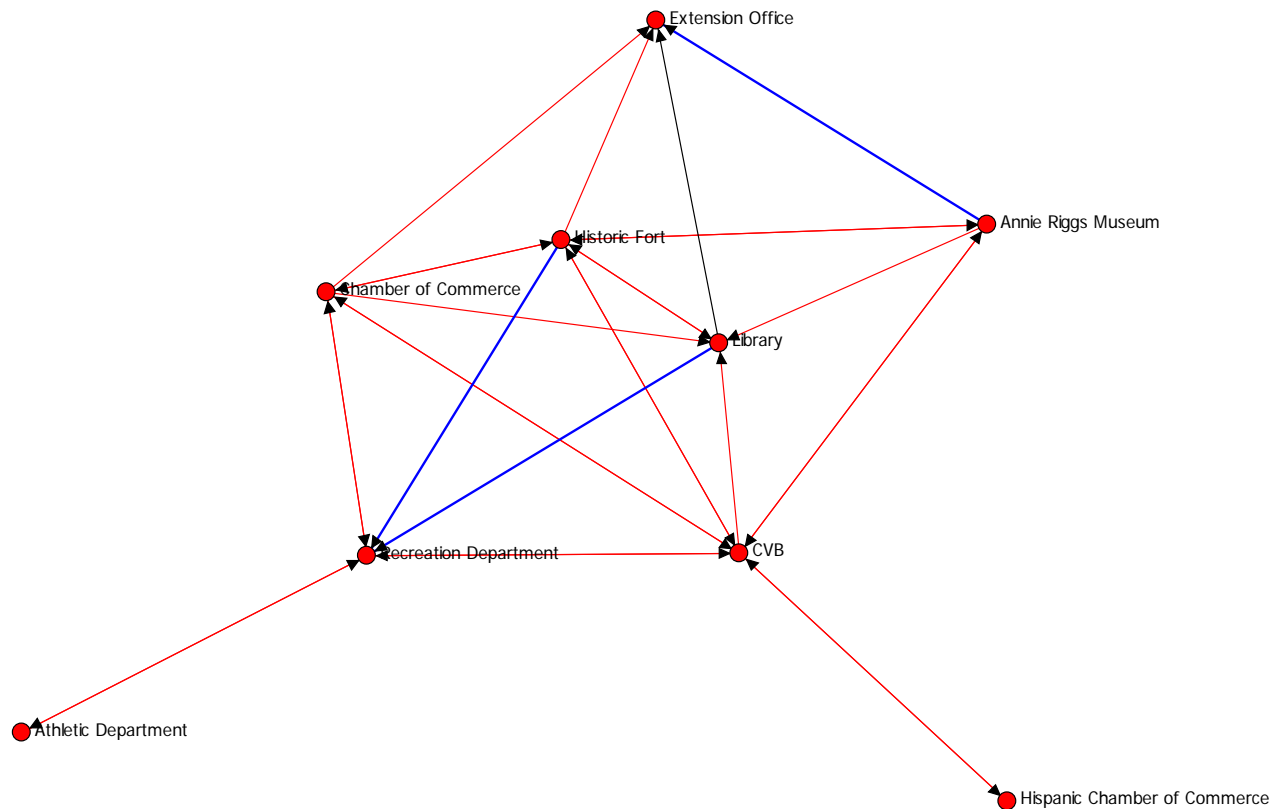


Note: Blue lines represent the reciprocal ties and the red lines represent the non-reciprocal.

## Node Reciprocity for Shared Resources

Organization	Symmetric	Non-Symmetric	Out/N	In/No
Chamber	.667	.333	1.000	.000
Hispanic Chamber	.000	1.000	1.000	.000
CVB	.667	.333	.500	.500
Rec. Dept.	.571	.429	.000	1.000
Extension	.000	1.000	.500	.500
Annie Riggs	.500	.500	.667	.333
Historic Fort	.800	.200	1.000	.000
Library	.667	.333	.000	1.000
Athletic Dept.	1.000	.000		

## Network Ties for Help Sent

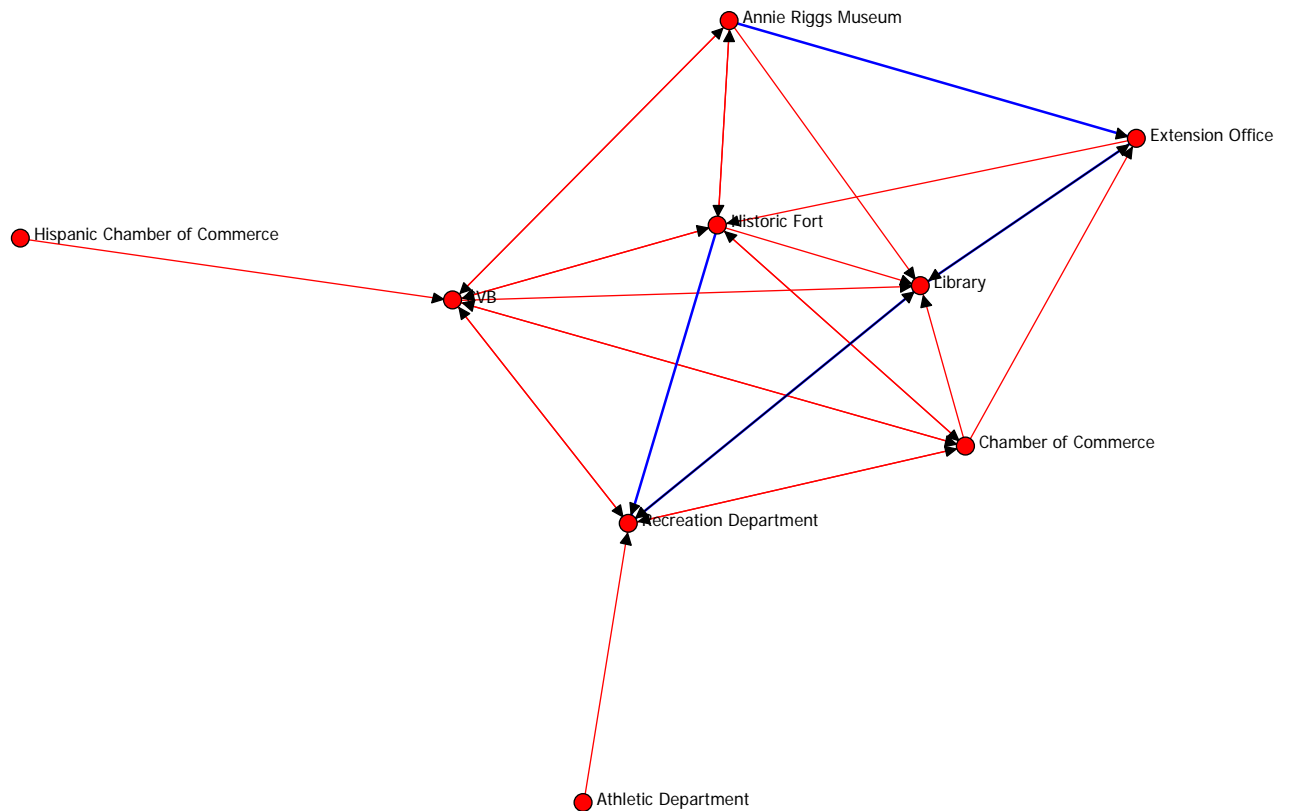


Note: Blue lines represent the reciprocal ties and the red lines represent the non-reciprocal.

## Node Reciprocity for Help Sent

Organization	Symmetric	Non-Symmetric	Out/N	In/No
Chamber	.600	.400	1.000	.000
Hispanic Chamber	1.000	.000		
CVB	.833	.167	.1000	.000
Rec. Dept.	.600	.400	.000	1.000
Extension	.000	1.000	.000	.1000
Annie Riggs	.500	.500	.1000	.000
Historic Fort	.667	.333	1.000	.000
Library	.167	.833	.400	.600
Athletic Dept.	1.000	.000		

## Network Ties for Help Received



Note: Blue lines represent the reciprocal ties and the red lines represent the non-reciprocal.

## Node Reciprocity for Help Received

Organization	Symmetric	Non-Symmetric	Out/N	In/No
Chamber	.600	.400	1.000	.000
Hispanic Chamber	.000	1.000	1.000	.000
CVB	.667	.333	.500	.500
Rec. Dept.	.600	.400	.000	1.000
Extension	.250	.750	.333	.667
Annie Riggs	.500	.500	1.000	.000
Historic Fort	.500	.500	.667	.333
Library	.333	.667	.000	1.000
Athletic Dept.	.000	1.000	1.000	.000

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